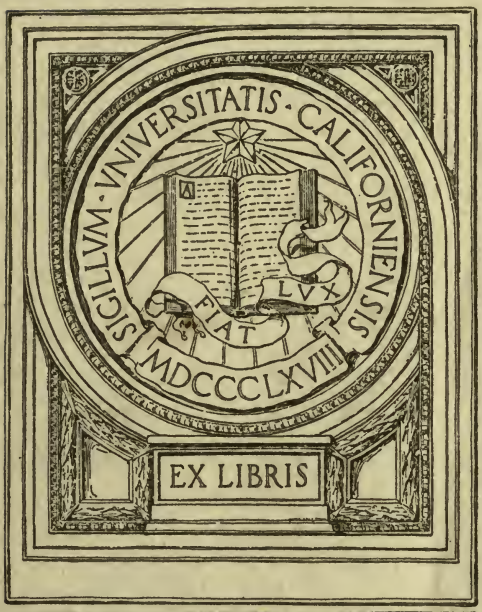
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A VAGABOND JOURNEY AROUND THE WORLD

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Harry A Franck

A VAGABOND JOURNEY AROUND THE WORLD

A NARRATIVE OF
PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

BY

HARRY A. FRANCK

ILLUSTRATED WITH MORE THAN
ONE HUNDRED PHOTOGRAPHS

Pour connaître les véritables moeurs d'un pays il faut descendre dans d'autres états; car celles des riches sont presque partout les mêmes.

JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU.

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TO MY ALMA MATER
THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
WITHOUT WHOSE TRAINING
THIS UNDERTAKING HAD BEEN IMPOSSIBLE

225964

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A FOREWORD OF EXPLANATION

Some years ago, while still an undergraduate, I chanced to be present at an informal gathering in which the conversation turned to confessions of respective aspirations.

"If only I had a few thousands," sighed a senior, "I 'd make a trip around the world."

"Modest ambition!" retorted a junior, "But you 'd better file it away for future reference, till you have made the money."

"With all due respect to bank accounts," I observed, "I believe a man with a bit of energy and good health could start *without* money and make a journey around the globe."

Laughter assailed the suggestion; yet as time rolled on I found myself often musing over that hastily conceived notion. Travel for pleasure has ever been considered a special privilege of the wealthy. That a man without ample funds should turn tourist seems to his fellow-beings an action little less reprehensible than an attempt to finance a corporation on worthless paper. He who would see the world, and has not been provided the means thereto by a considerate ancestor, should sit close at home until his life work is done, his fortune made. Then let him travel; when his eyes have grown too dim to catch the beauty of a distant landscape, when struggle and experience have rendered him blasé and unimpressionable.

A spirit of rebellion against this traditional notion suggested a problem worthy of investigation. What would befall the man who set out to girdle the globe as the farmer's boy sets out to seek his fortune in the neighboring city; on the alert for every opportunity, yet scornful of the fact that every foot of the way has not been paved before him? There were, of course, other motives than mere curiosity to urge me to undertake such an expedition. As a vocation I had chosen the teaching of modern languages; foreign travel promised to add to my professional preparation. Were I permitted an avocation it would be the study of social conditions; what surer

way of gaining vital knowledge of modern society than to live and work among the world's workmen in every clime? In the final reckoning, too, an inherent Wanderlust, to which, as an American, I lay no claim as a unique characteristic, was certainly not without its influence.

It was not until a year after my graduation that opportunity and my plans were ripe. I resolved to take a "year off," to wander through as much of the world as possible, and to return to my desk in the autumn, fifteen months later. As to my equipment for such a venture: I spoke French and German readily, Spanish and Italian with some fluency; I had "worked my way" on shorter journeys, had earned wages at a dozen varieties of manual labor in my own country, and had crossed the Atlantic once as a cattle man and once before the mast. It was my original intention to attempt the journey without money, without weapons, and without carrying baggage or supplies; to depend both for protection and the necessities of life on personal endeavor and the native resources of each locality. That plan I altered in one particular. I decided to carry a kodak; and to obviate the necessity of earning en route what I might choose to squander in photography, I set out with a sum that seemed sufficient to cover that extraneous expense; to be exact: with one hundred and four dollars. As was to be expected, I spent this reserve fund early, in those countries of northern Europe in which I had not planned an extensive stay. But the conditions of the self-imposed test were not thereby materially altered; for before the journey ended I had spent in photography, from my earnings, more than the original amount,— to be exact again: one hundred and thirteen dollars.

The chief object of investigation being the masses, I made no attempt during the journey to rise above the estate of the common laborer. My plan included no fixed itinerary. The details of route I left to chance and the exigencies of circumstances. Yet this random wandering brought me to as many famous spots as any victim of a "personally conducted tour" could demand; and in addition, to many corners unknown to the regular tourist. These latter it is that I have accentuated, passing lightly over well-known scenes. It is easy and, alas, too often customary for travelers to weave fanciful tales. But a story of personal observation of social conditions can

be of value only in so far as it adheres to the truth of actual experience. I have, therefore, told the facts in every particular, denying myself the privilege even of altering unimportant details to render more dramatic many a somewhat prosaic incident. The names of places, institutions, and persons appearing in the text are in every case authentic; the illustrations are chosen entirely from the photographs I took during the journey.

The question that aroused my curiosity has been answered. A man *can* girdle the globe without money, weapons, or baggage. It is in the hope that the experiences and observations of such a journey may be of interest to fireside travelers that I offer the following account of my Wanderjahr.

The author wishes to acknowledge the courtesy of *Harper's Weekly, Outing* and *The Century Magazine* in permitting him to republish from their pages certain chapters of this book.

A VAGABOND JOURNEY AROUND THE WORLD

A VAGABOND JOURNEY AROUND THE WORLD

CHAPTER I

PRELIMINARY RAMBLES

ON the eighteenth day of June, 1904, I boarded the ferry that plies between Detroit and the Canadian shore, and, coasting the sloping beach of verdant Belle Isle, swung off on the first stage of my journey around the globe. At the landing stage a custom officer glanced through my bag, stared perplexedly from the kodak to my laborer's garb, and with a shrug of his shoulders passed me on into the streets of the Canadian village.

A two-mile tramp brought me to the Walkerville cattle-barns, where thousands of gaunt calves are rounded up each autumn to come forth in the summer plump bulls and steers, ready for the markets of old England. From the long rows of low, brick buildings sounded now and then a deep bellow or the song or whistle of a stock feeder at his labor. I had arranged for my passage some days before, and, dropping my bag at the office, I joined the crew in the yard.

Months of well-fed inactivity had not tamed the spirits of the sleek animals that were set loose and driven one by one out of the various stables. The racing, bellowing cattle, urged slowly up the shute into the waiting cars by blaspheming stockmen, waving lance-like poles above their heads, gave to the scene the aspect of a riotous *corrida de toros*. The sun had set and darkness had fallen in the alleyways between the endless stables before the last bull was tied and the last car door locked. The shunting engine gave a warning whistle. We, who were to attend the stock en route raced to the office for our bundles, and, tossing them on top of the freight cars, climbed after them.

There were no formal leave-takings between the little stock-yard community on the shute platform and those who were "crossin' the

pond wi' the bullocks." The cars began to move amid such words of farewell as might have been exchanged with one setting out for the nearby village:

"So long, Jim, keep sober."

"Don't fergit me that tin o' Wills' Smokin', Bob."

"Give me best to Molly down on the Broomielaw, Jim," with an over-drawn wink at that worthy standing stolidly on the last car.

Jim and Bob were "boss cattle men," each of whom, though still young, had made scores of trips between the barns and the principal ports of Great Britain.

A short run down the spur brought us to the main line of the Canadian Pacific; our cars were joined to a train that was making up, and we made our way to the caboose that had been rammed on behind. Though the companies permit it, train men look with no kindly eye on the intrusion of traveling "cow-punchers" into their home and castle. As we emerged into the glare of the tail-lights, carrying our bundles and poles, a surly growl gave us greeting:

"Huh! 'Nother bloody bunch o' cattle stiffs!"

A steady run of thirty-six hours, enlivened by changes of caboose at unseemly hours, crews of increasing surliness, and a tramp along the cars at every halt to "punch 'em up" brought us to Montreal. The feeders at the railroad pens took charge of the shipment and we repaired to the "Stockyards Hotel," a hostelry pervaded from barroom to garret by the odor of cattle. Thus far our destination had been uncertain, but, not long after our arrival, information leaked out that we were to sail for Glasgow on the *Sardinian* two days later.

On that second evening, I reported at a wharf peopled by a half-hundred men whose only basis of fellowship, apparently, was penniless ness and riotous desire to secure passage to the British Isles. Twelve hundred cattle, collected from several Canadian feeding centers, were to be shipped and, besides the bosses, twenty cattle men were needed. A few, like myself, had come overland with the stock trains; but the throng was made up chiefly of those who had paid a Montreal agency $2.50 for the privilege of shipping.

Over these we were given precedence. "Farnsworth's gang" was summoned first and under the lead of our boss we filed into the shipping-office, to be greeted by a blustering officer seated before the ship's log:

"What 's yer name?"

"H. Franck."

"Ever been over before?"

"Yes, sir, on the Manchester Importer."

The name was recorded and I touched the pen to make binding the contract I had signed by proxy.

"All right! Fi' bob fer the run. Next!"

Our boss was entitled to eight men, four of whom he had already chosen. The last of these had barely given his name, when the "agency stiffs" swept aside the policeman who had held them back, and surged screaming into the office. We left them to fight for the coveted places and, stepping out into the night, groped our way on board the *Sardinian*. Even while we wandered among the empty cattle pens, built on her four decks, we clung jealously to our bundles, for the skill of the Montreal wharf-rat in "lifting bags" is proverbial among seafaring men.

Towards midnight several loads of baled straw were sent on board, and those of us who had not succeeded in hiding "turned to" to bed down the pens. Like many another transatlantic liner, the *Sardinian*, homeward bound, carried cattle in the spaces allotted to third-class passengers on the outward journey. It was not, however, for this reason, as one of my new acquaintances was convinced, that this section of the ship was known as the steerage.

The bedding completed, we threw ourselves down in the stalls and fell asleep. Long before the day broke, the entire ship's company, from the first mate to the sleepiest "stiff," was rudely awakened by a stampede of excited cattle and the blatant curses of their drivers. The stock-yard tenders had tied up alongside. In three hours our cargo was complete; the panting animals were securely tied in their stanchions; the winch had yanked up on deck the three or four bulls that, having been killed in the rush, were to be dumped in the outer bay; and we were off down the St. Lawrence. The crew fell to coiling up the shore-lines and joined the cattle men in a rousing chorus:—

> "We 're homeward bound, boys, for Glasgow town,
> Good-by, fare thee well! good-by, fare thee well!
> We 'll soon tread the Broomielaw now, my belle,
> Good-by, fare thee well; good-by."

Our passage varied little from the ordinary trip of a cattle boat. A few quarrels and an occasional free-for-all mêlée were to be expected, for the "stiffs' fo'c'stle" housed a heterogeneous com-

pany. Some of our mates were skilled workmen of industry and good habits, bound on a visit to their old homes. Contrasted with them were several incorrigible wharf-rats, bred on the docks of the United Kingdom, who had somehow contrived to cross the Atlantic to what had been pictured to them as a land "where a bloke c'n live like a gent at 'ome widout wavin' 'is bleedin' flipper." The western hemisphere had proved no such ideal loafing-place. Bound back now to their accustomed haunts, the disillusioned rowdies spent their energies in heaping curses on America and those who had painted it in such glowing colors. They were not pleasant messmates.

The work on the *Sardinian* was, as we had anticipated, hard, the food unfit to eat, and the forecastle unfit to live in. But there were no "first trippers" among us and all had shipped with some knowledge of the treatment meted out to "cattle stiffs."

On the tenth day out, the second of July, we came on deck to find, a few miles off to starboard, the sloping coast of Ireland, patches of growing and ripening grain giving the island the appearance of a huge, tilted checkerboard. Before night fell, we had left behind Paddy's Mile-stone and the Mull o' Kintyre, and it was near the mouth of the Clyde that we completed our last feeding.

A mighty uproar awakened us at dawn. Urged on by the bellows of Glasgow longshoremen, the cattle were slipping and sliding down the gangway into the wharf paddock. Unrestrained joy burst forth in the feeders' quarters. Enmities were quickly forgotten, the few razors passed quickly from hand to hand, beards of two weeks' growth disappeared as if by magic, bags were snatched open, the rags and tatters that had done duty as clothing on the voyage were poked in endless stream through the porthole into the already poisonous Clyde, and an hour later the "stiffs," looking almost respectable, were scattering along the silent streets of Sunday-morning Glasgow.

Strange it seemed next morning to find business moving as usual, with no sounds of celebration, for it was the Fourth, "Independence" or "Rebellion" day, according to the nationality of the speaker. At noon we gathered on board the *Sardinian* to receive our "fi' bob" and our discharges from the Board of Trade. These latter were good for the return trip on the same steamer, but few besides the bosses intended to avail themselves of the privilege. As for myself, I found another use for the document. One who is moving about Europe in the garb of a laborer must be ever ready to declare his station in life. The answer of the American tramp that he is "just a' travelin'"

A boss cattle-man of the Walkerville barns who has crossed the Atlantic scores of times

Upon arrival in Montreal I put up at the "Stock Yards Hotel" and get a preliminary hair-cut in anticipation

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will not pass muster across the water. To have called myself a carpenter or a teamster without corroborating testimonials would have been as foolish as to have told the truth. The discharge from the *Sardinian,* though issued to a cattle man, did not differ materially from that of an able seaman. My corduroy suit and cloth cap gave me the appearance of a Jack ashore. I decided to pose henceforth as a sailor.

Tucking my kodak into an inside coat pocket, I sold my bag for the price of a ticket on the night steamer to Belfast. A two days' tramp along the highways of the Emerald Isle was a pleasant "limbering up" for more extended journeys to come. It might have been longer but for an incessant rain that drove me back to Scotland.

On the afternoon of my return to Glasgow I struck out along the right bank of the Clyde towards the Highlands. An overladen highway led through Dumbarton, a town of factories, that poured its waste products into the sluggish river of poison, and brought me at evening to Alexandria. A band was playing. I joined the recreating throng and stretched out on the village green. What a strange fellow is the Scotchman! In a few short hours he runs through the whole gamut of emotions, gloomy and despondent when things go wrong, romping and joking a moment after.

The sun was still well above the horizon when the concert ended, though the hour of nine had already sounded from the church spire.

Not far beyond the town the hills died away on the left and disclosed the unruffled surface of Loch Lomond, its western end aglow with the light of the drowning sun. By and by the moon rose to cast a phosphorescent shimmer over the Loch and its little wooded islands. On the next hillside stood a field of wheat shocks. I turned into it, giving the owner's house a wide berth. The straw was fresh and clean, just the thing for a soft bed. But wheat sheaths do not offer substantial protection against the winds of the Scottish Highlands, and it was not with a sense of having slept soundly that I rose at daybreak and pushed on.

Two hours of tramping brought me to Luss, a cozy little village on the edge of the Loch. I hastened to the principal street in quest of a restaurant, but the hamlet was everywhere silent and asleep. Down on the beach of the Loch a lone fisherman, preparing his tackle for the day's labor, took umbrage at my suggestion that his fellow-townsmen were late risers.

"Why mon, 'tis no late!" he protested, "'tis no more nor five, an'

a bonny mornin' it is, too. But there 's a mist in it," he added pessimistically.

I glanced at the bright morning sun and the unclouded sky and set down both statements for fiction. But a clock-maker's window down the beach confirmed the first, and the second proved as true before the day was done. Stifling my premature hunger, I stretched out on the sands to await the morning steamer; for Ben Lomond, the ascent of which I had planned, stood just across the Loch.

About six a heavy-eyed shopkeeper sold me a roll of bologna, concocted of equal parts of pepper and meat, and a loaf of day-before-yesterday's bread. The steamer whistle sounded before I had regained the beach. I purchased a ticket at the shore-end of the distorted wooden wharf and hurried out to board the craft. My way was blocked by a burly Scot who demanded " tu p'nce."

" But I 've paid my fare," I protested, holding up the ticket.

" Aye, mon, ye hov," rumbled the native, straddling his legs and setting his elbows akimbo. " Ye hov, mon. But ye hovna paid fer walkin' oot t' yon boat on oor wharf."

Ten minutes later I paid a similar sum for the privilege of walking off the boat at Renwardenen.

Plodding across a half-mile of heath and morass, I struck into the narrow, white path that zigzagged up the face of the Ben, and soon overtook three Glasgow firemen, off for a day's vacation in the hills. The mist that the fisherman had foreseen began to settle down and turned soon to a drenching rain. For five hours we scrambled silently upward in Indian file, slipping and falling on wet rocks and into deep bogs, to come at last to a broad, flat boulder where the path vanished. It was the summit of old Ben Lomond, a tiny island in a sea of whirling grey mist, into which the wind bowled us when we attempted to stand erect. My companions fell to cursing their luck in expressive Scotch. The remnants of a picnic lunch under the shelter of a cairn tantalized us with the thought of how different the scene would have been on a day of sunshine. I was reminded, too, of the bread and bologna that had been left over from my breakfast, and I thrust a hand hopefully into my pocket. My fingers plunged into a floating pulp of pepper, dough, and bits of meat and paper that it would have been an insult to offer to share with the hungriest mortal; and I fell to munching the mess alone.

Two of the firemen decided to return the way we had come. With the third I set off down the opposite slope towards Inversnaid. In

the first simultaneous stumble down the mountain side, we lost all sense of direction and, fetching up in a boggy meadow, wandered for hours over knolls and through swift streams, now and then scaring up a flock of shaggy highland sheep that raced away down primeval valleys. Well on in the afternoon, as we were telling ourselves for the twentieth time that Inversnaid must be just over the next ridge, we came suddenly upon a hillside directly above the landing stage of Renwardenen. On this side of the Loch was neither highway nor footpath. For seven miles we dragged ourselves, hand over hand, through the thick undergrowth, and even then must each take a header into an icy mountain river before we reached our goal.

Here a new disappointment awaited me. Instead of the town I had expected, Inversnaid consisted of a landing stage and a hotel of the millionaire-club variety in which my worldly wealth would scarcely have paid a night's lodging, even should the house dogs have permitted so bedraggled a being to approach the establishment. The fireman wandered down to the wharf and I turned towards a cluster of board shanties at the roadside.

"Can you sell me something to eat?" I inquired of the sour-faced mountaineer who opened the first door.

"I can no!" he snapped, "go to the hotel."

There were freshly baked loaves plainly in sight in the next hovel, but I received a similar rebuff.

"Have you nothing to eat in the house?" I demanded.

"No, mon, I'm no runnin' a shop."

"But you can sell me a loaf of that bread?"

"No!" bellowed the Scot, "we hovna got any. Go to the hotel. Yon's the place for tooreests."

The invariable excuse was worn threadbare before I reached the last hut, and, though I had already covered twenty-five miles, I struck off through the sea of mud that passed for a highway, towards Aberfoyle, fifteen miles distant.

The rain continued. An hour beyond, the road skirted the shore of Loch Katrine and stretched away across a desolate moorland. Fatigue drove away hunger and was in turn succeeded by a drowsiness in which my legs moved themselves mechanically, carrying me on through the dusk and into the darkness. It was past eleven when I splashed into Aberfoyle, too late to find an open shop in straight-laced Scotland, and, routing out a servant at a modest inn, I went supperless to bed. Months afterward, when I was in training for such undertak-

ings, a forty-mile tramp left no evil effects; at this early stage of the journey the experience was not quickly forgotten.

The attraction of the open road was lacking when, late the next morning, I hobbled out into the streets of Aberfoyle, and, my round of sight-seeing over, I wandered down to the station and took train for Stirling. Long before the journey was ended, there appeared, far away across the valleys, that most rugged of Scotland's landmarks, the castle of Stirling. Like the base of some giant pillar erected by nature and broken off by a mightier Sampson, it stands in solemn isolation in a vast, rolling plain, the very symbol of staunch independence and sturdy defiance.

My imagination far back in the days of Wallace and Bruce, I made my way up to the monument from the city below, half expecting, as I entered the ancient portal, to find myself surrounded by those bold and fiery warriors of past ages. And surely, there they were! That group of men in bonnets and kilts, gazing away across the parapets. Cautiously I approached them. What pleasure it would be to hear the old Scottish tongue and, perhaps, the story of some feud among the fierce clans of the Highlands! Suddenly one of the group strode away across the courtyard. As he passed me, he began to sing. A minstrel lay of ancient days, in the old Gaelic tongue? No, indeed. He had broken forth in the rasping voice of a Liverpool bootblack, juggling his H's, as only a Liverpool bootblack can, in "The Good Old Summer Time."

An hour afterward I faced the highway again, bound for Edinburgh. The route led hard by the battle-field of Bannockburn, to-day a stretch of waving wheat, distinguished from the surrounding meadows, that history does not know, only by the flag of Britain above it. With darkness I found lodging in a wheat field overlooking the broad thoroughfare.

The next day was Sunday and the weather calorific. For all that, the highroad had its full quota of tramps. I passed the time of day with any number of these roadsters,— they call them "moochers" in the British Isles. Some were sauntering almost aimlessly along the shimmering route, others were stretched out at apathetic ease in shady glens carpeted with freshly-blossomed bluebells. The "moocher" is a being of far less activity and initiative than the American tramp. He is content to stroll a few miles each day, happy if he gleans a meager fare from the kindly disposed. He would no more think of "beating his way" on the railroads than of building an air-ship for

Women laborers in the linen-mills of Belfast, Ireland

S.S. *Sardinian*. "Lamps does a bit of painting above the temporary cattle-pens"

his aimless and endless wanderings. It is always walk with him, day after day, week after week; and if, by chance, he hears of the swift travel by "blind-baggage" and the full meals that fall to his counterpart across the water, he stamps them at once "bloody lies."

In stranger contrast to the American, the British tramp is quite apt to be a family man. As often as not he travels with a female companion whom he styles, within her hearing and apparently with her entire acquiescence, "me Moll" or "me heifer." But whatever his stamping ground the tramp is essentially the same fellow the world over. Buoyant of spirits for all his pessimistic grumble, generous to a fault, he eyes the stranger with deep suspicion at the first greeting, as uncommunicative and noncommittal as a bivalve. Then a look, a gesture suggests the world-wide question, "On the road, Jack?" Answer it affirmatively and, though your fatherland be on the opposite side of the earth, he is ready forthwith to open his heart and to divide with you his last crust.

I reached Edinburgh in the early afternoon, and, following the signs that pointed the way to the poor man's section, brought up in Haymarket Square. A multitude of unemployed, in groups and in pairs, sauntering back and forth, lounging about the foot of the central statue, filled the place. Here a hooligan, ragged and unkempt as his hearers, was holding forth, to as many as cared to listen, on the subject of governmental iniquities. There another, less fortunate than his unfortunate fellows, wandered from group to group in his shirt-sleeves, vainly trying to sell his coat for a "tanner" to pay a night's lodging.

High above towered the vast bulk of Edinburgh castle. A royal infant lowered from its windows, as happened, 'tis said, in the merry days of Queen Bess, would land to-day in a most squalid lodging house. Indeed, this is one point that the indigent wanderer gains over the wealthy tourist. The cheap quarters, the slums of to-day are, in many a European city, the places where the history of yesterday was made. The great man of a century ago did not dwell in a shaded suburb; he made his home where now the hooligan and the laborer eke out a precarious existence.

The sorry-looking building at the foot of the castle rock bore the sign:—

"Edinburgh Castle Inn. Clean, Capacious Beds, 6d."

I had too often been misled by similar self-assertive adjurations to expect any serious striving on the part of the proprietor to keep

anything but the sign in any marked degree of cleanliness. I was not prepared, however, to find the place as filthy as it proved. The cutting satire of the ensign was doubly apparent when I escaped again into the square. A "Bobby" marched pompously up and down not far from the brazen-voiced speaker, whose power of endurance should have won him a livelihood somewhere.

"Where shall I find a fairly cheap lodging house?" I inquired.

"Try the Cawstle Inn h'over there," replied "Bobby," with a majestic wave of his Sunday gloves towards the hostelry I had just inspected.

"But that place is not clean!" I protested.

"Not clean! Certainly it 's clean! There 's a bloomin' law makes 'em keep 'em clean," and "Bobby" glared at me as if I had libeled the King's Parliament and the Edinburgh police-force into the bargain.

I entered another inn facing the square, but was thankful to escape from it to the one I had first visited. Paying my "tanner" at a misshapen wicket, I received a stub bearing the number of my sty and passed into the main room. It was furnished with benches, tables, and a cooking establishment. For four pence the guest might have set before him an unappetizing, though fairly abundant, supper. By far the greater number of the inmates, however, were crowded around several cooking stoves at the back of the room. Water, fuel, and utensils were provided gratis to all who had paid their lodging. On the stoves was sputtering or boiling every variety of cheap food, tended by tattered men who handled frying-pans with their coat-tails as holders, and cut up cabbages or peeled potatoes with knives on the blades of which were half-inch deposits of tobacco. Each ate his concoction with the greatest relish as soon as it showed the least sign of approaching an edible condition, generally without any allowance of time for boiling messes to cool, thereby suffering more than once dire injury.

Three days later I took passage for London and on the afternoon following my arrival embarked at Gravesend on the *Batavien II*, bound for Rotterdam. The steerage fare was five shillings; in view of the accommodations, an extravagant price. My only companions amid the chaos of so-called mattresses strewn about the hold were a German *Hufschmied* and his bedraggled spouse, joint possessors of a bundle of rags containing a most distressingly powerful pair of lungs. The odor of the mattresses and the stench from the bundle turned the night

into a walking nightmare, which I spent in congratulating myself that the voyage was to be of short duration.

I climbed on deck at sunrise to find the ship steaming at half speed through a placid canal. Far down below us were clusters of squat cottages, the white smoke of kindling fires curling slowly upward from their chimneys. Here and there a peasant, looking quite tiny from the height of our deck, crawled along across the flat meadows. Away in the distance several stocky windmills were turning slowly yet ceaselessly in the morning breeze.

The canal opened out into the teeming harbor of Rotterdam. A custom's officer inquired my profession, slapped me paternally on the back with a warning in German to beware the "*schlechte Leute*" who lay in wait for seamen ashore, and dismissed me, while the well-dressed tourist still fumed over the uninspected luggage in his cabin.

I quickly tired of the confines of the city and turned out along the flat highway to Delft. The route skirted a great canal; at intervals it crossed branch waterways, all half-hidden by cumbersome cargo-boats. Heavily laden boats toiled slowly by on their way to market, empty boats glided easily homeward. On board, stocky men, bowed double over heavy pike-poles, marched laboriously from bow to stern. Along the graveled tow-paths that checkered the flat landscape, buxom women strained like over-burdened oxen at the tow-ropes about their shoulders. Wherever one met him the boating Dutchman shared most fairly with his wife the labor of propelling his unwieldy craft, except that the wife walked and the Dutchman rode.

In the early afternoon I briefly visited Delft, and pushed on towards the Hague. No wayfarer, obviously, could in a single day become accustomed to the national clatter of wooden shoes. Beyond Delft I turned into a narrow roadway paved in cobble-stones and flanked by two canals. It was a quiet route even for Holland. In serene contentment I pursued my lonely way, gazing off across the unbroken landscape. Suddenly a galloping "rat-a-tat" sounded close behind me. What else but a runaway horse could produce such a devil's tattoo? To pause and glance behind might cost me my life, for the frenzied brute was almost upon me. With a swiftness born of fear I took to my heels. A few yards beyond was a luckily-placed foot-bridge over one of the canals. I made a flying leap at the structure and gained it in safety, just as there dashed by me at full speed — a Hollander of some six summers, bound to market with a basket on his arm!

"S-Gravenhage," as the Dutchman calls his capital, was a city teeming with interest; but Holland was one of those countries which I purposed to "do" in orthodox tourist fashion and, after a few short hours in the royal borough, I sought out the highway to Leiden. My seeking was not particularly successful. The mongrel commixture of German, English, and pantomime in which I carried on conversation with the natives was a delectable language, but it did not always gain me lucid directions. Sharply prosecuted inquiries brought me to a road to Leiden, right enough, but it was not the public highway. Thanks to some misconstruction of the native dactylology, I set out for the stamping ground of Rembrandt along the old royal driveway.

It was a pleasure, of course, to travel by the Queen's own promenade, especially as it led through a fragrant forest park. Unfortunately, a royal demesne is no place in which to find an inn when hunger and darkness come on. This one had not even a cross-road to lead me back to the main highway, and I plodded on into the night amid unbroken solitude. Just what hour it was when I reached Leiden I know not. Beyond question it was late, for the good people, and even the bad, except a few drowsy policemen, were sound asleep; and with a painful number of miles in my legs I went to bed on a pile of lumber.

The warming sun rose none too early, though long before the first shopkeeper. Still fasting I set off towards Haarlem. On these flat lowlands this Sabbath day was oppressively hot. Yet how dolorously devout appeared the peasants who plodded for miles along the dusty highway to the village church! The men, those same men so comfortably picturesque in their work-a-day clothes, marched in their cumbersome Sunday garments like converts doing penance for their sins. The women, buxom always, but painfully awkward in stiffly starched gowns, tramped swelteringly behind the males. Even the children, the rollicking youngsters of the day before, were imprisoned in homemade straight-jackets and suffered martyrdom in uncomplaining silence. But one and all had a cheery word for the passerby and never that sour look which one "on the road" encounters on British highways.

Often, since leaving Rotterdam, I had wondered at the absence of wells in the rural districts. Surely these peasants' cottages were not connected by water-mains! Pondering the question, I had thus far quenched my thirst only in the villages. But towards noon on this

hot Sunday an imperative call for water drove me to turn in at an isolated cottage. Beside the road ran the omnipresent canal. A narrow foot-bridge crossed it to the gate before the dwelling, around which flowed a branch of the main waterway, giving a mooring for the peasant's canal-boat. The gate proved impregnable and it required much shouting to attract the attention of the householder. At last, from around a corner of the building, a *Vrouw* of the most buxom type hove into view and bore down upon me as an ocean liner sails into a calm harbor. My knowledge of Dutch being nil, I followed my usual method of coining a language by a process of elimination. Perhaps the lady spoke some German.

"Ein Glas Wasser, bitte."

"Vat?"

It could do no harm to give my mother tongue a trial.

"A glass of water."

"Eh!"

I tried a mixture of the two languages. For what is Dutch after all than a jumble of badly spelled English and German words with the endings lopped off?

"Ein glass of vater." It was the open sesame.

"Vater?" shrieked the lady with such vehemence that the rooster in the back yard leaped sideways a distance of six feet. "Vater!"

"Ja, vater, bitte."

A profound silence succeeded, a silence so absolute that one could have heard a fly pass by a hundred feet above. Slowly the lady placed a heavy hand on the intervening gate. A shadow passed over her face, as though she were mentally calculating the strength of resistance of the barrier against a madman. Then, with a bovine snort, she wheeled about and waddled towards the house. Close under the eaves of the cottage hung a tin basin. Snatching it down without a pause, the human steamship set a course for the family anchorage, stooped, dipped up a basinful of that selfsame weed-clogged water that flowed by in abundance at my feet, and tacked back across the yard to offer it to me with a magnanimous sigh of resignation. I quenched my thirst thereafter, in rural Holland, at roadside canals, after the manner of beasts of the field — and Hollanders.

Miles away from Haarlem appeared the great flower-farms for which this region is famous and, growing more and more frequent, continued into the very suburbs of the city itself. Across the ultra-fertile plain beyond, the broad highway to Amsterdam ran as straight

as a geometrical line. From the city of tulips to where it disappeared in the fog of rising heat waves, the thoroughfare was thronged with vehicles, riders, and, above all, with wheelmen, who, refusing to swerve a hair's breadth for my convenience, drove me ever and anon into the wayside ditch. The Hollander is, ordinarily, an obliging fellow, and in the main the humble workman or pedestrian is fairly treated. Yet that distinct line of demarkation between the "commoner" and the "upper class" is never obliterated. The American laborer may spend some time in the British Isles without noting this discrimination; he will not be long on the continent before the advantage of his status at home is shown forth in plain relief.

There is not that gradual shading off from the professional man to the coal-heaver that exists in the United States. One can no more conceive of a Hollander who looks forward to a career in the gentler walks of life "beginning at the bottom" than of one who aspires to the papacy taking a wife. He whose appearance stamps him as of those who live by the sweat of the brow cannot complain of any overt act of oppression. Yet he is early reminded that, as a worker with his hands, he has a distinct place in society and that he must keep to it. Among his fellow workmen, in his own caste, he lives and moves and has his being as in our own land. But in other ranks he catches here and there a glance, a gesture, a protesting silence, that brings home to him his lowly status.

My zigzag tramp ended late in the afternoon, and, after a deal of wandering in and out among the canals of the metropolis, I took a garret lodging overhanging a sluggish waterway. The proverbial cleanliness of Holland is no mere figure of speech. Few cities of the same size have as little of the slum district within their confines as Amsterdam. The Dutch laborer is, in many ways, far better off than those of the same class across the channel. In the city there is always a *Koffie Huis* close at hand, where eggs, milk, cheeses, and dairy products in general are served at small cost and in cleanly surroundings. Compare this diet with that of the British workman, who subsists often, not on food, but on the waste products of those places where food is prepared. One can identify a Briton of the lower classes by his teeth. At twenty he has a dozen, perhaps, that are neither broken off, crumbling, black, nor missing. At thirty he shows a few yellow fangs. But one cannot determine the class of the Hollander by the same sign. His diet is too wholesome.

Parks, museums, laborers' quarters, and the necessity of a protracted

search each evening for my canalside garret kept me three days in Amsterdam. On the fourth I drifted on board one of the tiny steamers of the Zuidersee and journeyed to Hoorn. Hoorn is one of Holland's dead cities, one of the many from which prosperity and wealth departed to come no more as the shifting sands of the North Sea blocked up their channels and drove away the rich commerce that was their fortune. Now they are dead indeed. A tiny remnant of a great population clatters along their deserted streets, a few of the ancient mansions house humbler inmates, and all about is ruin.

By no means regretting the whim that had carried me away to this land of yesterday, I set back along the See towards Amsterdam. The typical Hollander is nowhere seen to better advantage than in this district. The population plies two vocations. Along the shores and on the adjoining islands the stolid, picturesque fisherman is predominant. In the great, flat meadows the care of his cattle occupies the no less stolid, if less quaint, peasant.

There are wheat shocks even in Holland. As night was falling over the vast plain I withdrew to a roadside field and retired. A Dutchman spied me out in my resting-place at some silent hour, but sped away across the country like a firm believer in ghosts when I offered to share my bed. I awoke at daybreak to find myself within sight of the much maligned island of Marken, with an unobstructed view of the quaint old church of Monnickendam, a once populous city that has shrunk to a baggy-trousered hamlet of fisherfolk. Beyond the town there rattled by occasionally a milk or baker's cart, drawn, now by one dog, now by a team of two or three, harnessed together with utter disregard to size, breed, or disposition. Sometimes, indeed, a canine and a human team-mate tugged together at the traces.

There ran a rumor in my favorite Koffie Huis soon after my arrival at Amsterdam in the afternoon, that a cargo-boat which carried passengers for a song was to leave at four for Arnheim on the Rhine. I thrust a lunch into a pocket and hurried down to the mooring-place of the international liner. She was a canal-boat some twenty-five feet long and eight wide, as black as a coal-barge, though by no means as clean; her uncovered deck piled high with boxes, barrels, and crates ranging in contents from beer mugs to protesting live stock. I scrambled over the cargo and found a seat on a barrel of oil. It was already after four, but there was really no reason for my anxious haste. No Dutch cargo-boat was ever known to depart at the hour set.

It turned out that the overburdened craft was not yet loaded. From

time to time lethargic longshoremen wandered down to the wharf with more bales, crates, and boxes, and stacked them high about us. It was long after dark when their task was done, and, what with quarrels between the captain and the crew as to the proper channel, we were scarcely out of the harbor when dawn broke.

A long day we spent in jumping about the cargo like jack-rabbits, in a vain attempt to keep out of the way of the crew searching for a bale to set ashore at each wayside village. That alone would have been endurable. But our lives were made miserable by two Hungarians, owners of a barrel organ, who insisted that the infernal squawk which the machine emitted was "moosik," and who had the audacity to invite us periodically to pay for the torture.

I left the cargo-boat at Arnheim and, halting at the principal cities on its banks, made my way up the Rhine by steamer and on foot in a few days to Mainz. From there I turned eastward along the highway to Frankfurt. Strange and varied had been my sleeping-places in Germany. The innkeepers of the Fatherland, fearful of punishment for lodging those who turn out to be "wanted" by His Majesty's officers, are chary of offering accommodations to strangers. Whether it was due to the garb that stamped me as a wanderer or to a foreign accent, it was my fate to be treated in the Kaiser's realm as an extremely suspicious member of society.

It was late at night when I reached Frankfurt. The highway ended among the palatial edifices of the business section, and I wandered long in search of the poorer quarters. At last, in a dingy side street a tavern, offering *logieren* at one mark, drew my attention. Truly it was a high price to pay for a bed, but the hour was late and the night stormy. I entered the drinking-room, and waiting until the *Kellner* could catch a moment's respite from his strenuous task of silencing the shouts of "*Glas Bier*" that rose above the tumult, made my wants known.

"Beds?" cried the Kellner, too busy with his glasses to look up at me, "To be sure. We have always plenty of beds. One mark."

But *mein Herr* the proprietor was staring at me from the back of the hall. Slowly he shuffled forward, cocked his head on one side, and scrutinized me intently from out his bleary eyes.

"What does he want?" he demanded, turning to the tapster.

I answered the query myself and the customary inquisition began.

"Woher kommen Sie?"

Knowing from experience the order of the questions, I launched

A baker's cart of Holland on the morning round

A public laundry on the Rhine at Mainz, Germany

forth into the story of my life, past, present, and future, or one shoe of it as was in keeping with the assertion that I was an A falsetto sailor on a sight-seeing expedition in the Fatherland. Plausible hearers regarded it as a clumsy tale. Long before I had ended, going proprietor, the Kellner, and those clients of the house that have clustered around us, fell to nudging each other with grimaces of incredulity. The *Wirt,* harassed by the conflicting emotions of greed and fear, blinked his pudgy eyes and glanced for inspiration into the faces about him. The temptation to add another mark to his coffers was strong within him. Yet what would the police inspector say in the morning to the name of a foreigner on his register? He scratched his grizzly poll with a force that suggested that he was going clear down through it to extract an idea with his stubby fingers, glanced once more at the tipplers, and surrendered to fear.

"Es tut mir leid, Junge," he puffed, with a prolonged blink, "I am sorry, but we have not a bed left in the house."

I wandered out into the night and told my story to a second, a third, and even a fourth innkeeper with the same result. In despair I turned in at the fifth house resolved to try a strange plan — to tell the truth. In carefully chosen words I explained my identity and my purpose in visiting Germany in laborer's garb. Never before since leaving Detroit had I resorted to such an expedient, and I took good care not to repeat the experiment during my subsequent travels. I had barely elucidated my situation when the landlord informed me in no uncertain terms that I was a liar and an ass into the bargain; and that a hasty retreat from his establishment was the surest way of preserving my good health. He was a creature of awe-inspiring proportions, and I followed his suggestion promptly. At midnight a policeman directed me to an inn where suspicious characters were less of a novelty, and I was soon asleep.

I had not yet well learned the lesson, begun in the British Isles, that the homes of the famous of a century ago are the slums of to-day. Next morning I turned back to the brilliant thoroughfares, expecting to find somewhere along them the birthplace of Goethe. Once amid such surroundings as the greatest of the Germans might fittingly have graced by his presence, I addressed myself to a policeman. Goethe? Why, yes, the name seemed familiar. He was not sure, but he fancied the fellow lived in the eastern part of the city, and directed me accordingly. The way led through narrow, winding streets. Now and then I went astray, to be set right again by other

; of the law. The quest cost me a goodly amount of shoe-
and most of the morning, but I found at last the landmark I
king — exactly across the street from the inn in which I had

There was in Frankfurt after all a lodging house where wanderers free from the burden of wealth were welcome. I came across it during the day's roaming and took care not to forget its location. Several disreputable humans were wending their way thither as twilight fell and, joining them, I entered a great, dingy hall, low of ceiling, and poorly served in the matter of windows. A cadaverous female, established behind a rust-eaten wicket, was dealing out *Schlafmarken* at thirty *Pfennig* (7 cents) each. I pocketed one and hastened to find a place on one of the wooden benches; for the hall was rapidly filling with members of the Brotherhood of the Great Unwashed.

Drowsiness came quickly in the stifling atmosphere. I stepped to the wicket and asked to be shown to my quarters.

"What!" croaked the hollow-eyed matron, "bed? You can't sleep yet. Wait till you hear the bell at ten-thirty."

I turned back to the bench only to find that another squatter had jumped my claim. Too sleepy to stand unaided, I hung myself up against the wall and waited. If the dreams from which I was aroused were not much shorter than they seemed, several days passed before there sounded the sudden clang of an iron-voiced bell. The resulting stampede carried me to the second floor.

In an evilly-ventilated room, lower of ceiling than the hall below, I found that cot thirty-seven, to which I had been assigned, could be reached only by climbing over several of the sixty which as many men in varying stages of insobriety were preparing to occupy. By a series of contortions, in the execution of which I often thumped with my elbows the man behind me and displaced my cot sufficiently to cause the downfall of my opposite neighbor, whose equilibrium was far from stable, I succeeded in removing my shoes and coat. To venture further in the disrobing process seemed undesirable. I spread my germ-proof jacket across the animated coverlet and lay down. Before the last sot had ceased his maudlin grumbling there broke out here and there in the room a dialogue of snores. Rapidly it increased to a chorus. In ten minutes the ensemble would have put to shame the most atrocious steam calliope ever inflicted upon a defenceless public. Reiterated kicks and punches reduced to com-

parative silence the few slumberers within reach; by shying one shoe at a distant sleeper whose specialty was a nerve-racking falsetto and the other at a fellow whose deep bass set the cots to trembling in sympathy, I brought a moment's respite. But the dread of going forth in the morning unshod drove me on an expedition across the bodies of my room-mates and, by the time I had recovered my footwear, the chorus was again swelling forth in Wagnerian volume. I gave up in despair and settled down on the hill and dale mattress to convince myself that I was sleeping in spite of the infernal bedlam.

There runs a proverb, the origin of which is lost among the traditions of hoar antiquity, to the effect that misfortunes travel in bands. That it is true I have never doubted since the day following that broken-backed night in Frankfurt. It was curiosity that called down upon my head this new adversity, for naught else could have moved me to investigate the secrets hidden behind a fourth-class ticket to Weimar. In all the countries of Europe there is nothing that compares with the fourth-class railway service of Germany. The necessity of providing some mode of transportation cheaper than walking may be an excuse for its perpetration, but woe betide the unsuspecting traveler who, for mere matter of economy, abandons for this system that of our ancient forebears.

Intending to take the nine o'clock train, I purchased a ticket about eight-forty and stepped out upon the platform just in time to hear a guard bellow the German variation of "all aboard." The Weimar train stood close at hand. As I stepped towards it, four policemen, strutting about the platform, let out simultaneous war-whoops, and sprang after me.

"Wo gehen Sie hin?" shrieked the first to reach me.

"Ich gehe nach Weimar."

"Aber, the train to Weimar is gone!" shouted the second officer.

As I had a hand on the carriage door, I made so bold as to deny the assertion.

"Aber, ja, er ist fort!" gasped the sergeant who brought up the rear of the constabulary deluge. "It is gone! The guard has already said 'all aboard.'"

The train stood at the edge of the platform long enough to have emptied and filled again; but, as it was gone ten minutes before it started, I was forced to wait for the next one at ten-thirty.

The fourth-class carriage, unlike other European cars, was built on the American plan, with a door at each end. In reality it was

nothing more than a box car with wooden benches around the sides and a few apologies for windows. Almost before we were under way, the most unkempt couple aboard stood up and turned loose what they evidently thought was a song. Many of the passengers seemed to be victims of the same auricular illusion, for the pair gleaned a handful of Pfennige before descending at the first station. The bawl of cracked voices, however, was but a prelude to worse visitations, for, as no train man enters the cars while they are in motion, fourth-class travelers are the prey of every grafter who chooses to inflict himself upon them.

We stopped at a station at least every four miles during that day's journey. At the first hamlet beyond Frankfurt the car slowly filled with peasants and laborers in heavy boots and rough smocks, who carried sundry farm implements ranging from pitchforks to young plows. Sunburned women, on whose backs were strapped huge baskets stuffed with every product of the countryside from cabbages to babies, packed into the center of the car, turned their backs upon those of us who occupied the benches, and serenely leaned themselves and their loads against us. The carriage filled at last to its utmost limits, and its capacity passed belief, a guard outside closed the heavy door with a bang, and uttered a mighty shout of "*Vorsicht*"! (look out), evidently to inform those near the portal that they were lucky to have "looked out" before it was slammed. The station master on the platform, a man boasting a uniform no American rear-admiral could afford, or dare to appear in, raised a hunting-horn to his lips and gave as a signal of departure such a blast as echoed through the ravines of Roncesvalles. The head-guard drew his whistle and shrilly seconded the command of his superior. The engineer whistled back to inform the guard that he was ready to do his duty. The guard repeated his sibilant order. The driver liberated another pent-up shriek to show how easily his engine could reach high C, or to imply that he was fast nerving himself up to open the throttle; the man on the platform whistled again to cheer him on; a heroic squeal came from the cab in answer; and, with a jerk that sent peasants, baskets, farm-tools, lime-pails, cabbages, and babies into a conglomerate, struggling mass at the back end of the car, we were off. To celebrate which auspicious event the engineer emitted a final shriek and gave a second yank, lest some sure-footed individual had by any chance retained his equilibrium.

By the time some semblance of order had been restored, unwieldy

peasant women pulled out of the clawing miscellany and stood right end up, cabbages and babies restored to their proper baskets, pitchforks and smocks disentangled, the next station was reached and a sudden stop undid all our efforts, this time stacking the passengers at the front end. Some minutes after the train had come to a standstill, when long-distance travelers had lost all hope of relief from the sweltering congestion, the countrymen began slowly to wander out at the doors. The exodus continued until there remained in the car only those few through-passengers, who, utterly cowed and subjugated, shrank back on the benches to escape attention. Then the vanguard of another multitude, bound for a village some three miles distant, made its appearance and history repeated itself.

There were times, too, during the journey when the villages were apparently too far apart to suit the engine-driver. For occasionally, soon after having run through his entire repertoire of toots, he suddenly, remarkably suddenly in fact, brought the engine to a halt in the open country. But as German railway laws forbid voyagers to step out, crawl out, or peep out of the car under such circumstances without a special permit from the guard, countersigned under seal by the head-guard, there was no means of learning whether the engineer had lost his courage or merely caught sight of a wild flower that particularly took his fancy.

Such are the pleasures of a fourth-class excursion in Germany. Travelers by first-class, it is said, suffer fewer inconveniences, but, however varied the accommodations may be, the prices are more so. At every booking-office is posted a placard giving the cost of transportation to every other town in the Empire. He who would ride on upholstered seats pays a bit higher rate than in the United States. Second-class costs one-half, third-class one-fourth as much. Three other rates are quoted: fourth-class, soldiers' tickets, and *Hundekarten* (dog tickets). The German conscript pays one-half fourth-class fare and rides in a third-class carriage. Hundekarten cost fourth-class fare. Verily it is better in Germany to be a soldier than a dog — at least while traveling.

I arrived at Weimar late at night. A stroll to Jena the following afternoon led through a pleasant rural district well known to the "poet pair" of Germany and the soldiers of Napoleon. From Jena I turned westward again, and, braving the rigors of fourth-class travel for two interminable days, descended during the waning hours of July at the city of Metz.

When August broke in the east, I turned pedestrian once more and set out towards Paris on the *Route Nationale,* constructed in the days when Mayence was a proud French city. The road wound its way over rolling hills, among the ravines and valleys of which was fought a great battle of the Franco-Prussian war. For miles along the way, dotting the hillsides, standing singly or in clusters along lazy brooks, or half-hidden by the foliage of summer, were countless simple, white crosses, bearing only the brief inscription "Hier ruhen Krieger-1870." Beyond, the colossal statue of a soldier of past decades pointed away across a deep-wooded glen to the vast graveyard of his fallen comrades.

A mile further on, in the open country, out of sight of even a peasant's cottage, two iron posts at the wayside marked the boundary established by the treaty of Versailles. A farmer with his mattock stood in Germany grubbing at a weed that grew in France.

Mindful of the lack of cordiality that exists between the two countries, I anticipated some delay at the frontier. The custom-house was a mere cottage, the first building of a straggling village some miles beyond the international line. A mild-eyed Frenchman, in a uniform worn shiny across the shoulders and the seat of the trousers, wandered out into the highway at my approach. Behind him strolled a second officer. But the difficulties I had expected were existent only in my own imagination. The pair cried out in surprise at mention of my nationality; they grew garrulous at the announcement that I was bound to Paris *à pied.* But their only official act was to inspect my bundle, and I pressed on amid their cries of "bon voyage."

The highways of France are broad and shaded, her innkeepers neither exclusive nor intrusive; yet even here pedestrianism has its drawbacks. Chief among them are the railway crossings. The French system of protection against accidents is effective, no doubt; but if *monsieur* the Frenchman were as impatient a being as the American the mortality would be little lessened, for the delay involved at these *traverses du chemin de fer* would choke with rising choler as many as might come to grief at an unprotected crossing.

On either side of the track is a ponderous *barrière,* the opening and shutting of which would be slow under the best of circumstances. Being always tended by a colossal *barrièrière* (gate-woman) who moves with the stately grace of a house being raised on jack-screws, the barricade is unduly effective. Ten minutes before a train

is due, *la barrièrière* hoists herself erect, waddles across the track to draw the further gate, closes the nearer one, and, having locked both, returns to the shade of her cottage. The train may be an hour late, but that is beside the question. This is the time that Madame is hired to lock the gates and locked they must remain until the train has passed. Woe betide the intrepid voyager who tries to climb over them, for her tongue is sharp and the long arm of the law is arrayed on her side.

Plodding early and late, I covered the round-about route through Châlons, Rheims, and Meaux, and reached Paris a few days after crossing the frontier. A month of tramping had made me as picturesque a figure as any *boulevardier* of Montmartre; moreover, August in the French capital was neither the time nor the place to display garments chosen with the winds of the Scottish Highlands in mind. I picked up in the Boulevard St. Denis, at a gross expenditure of fifteen francs, an outfit more in keeping with the weather, took up my abode in a garret of the Latin Quarter, and roamed at large in the city for three weeks.

CHAPTER II

ON THE ROAD IN FRANCE AND SWITZERLAND

THE month of August was drawing to a close when I swung my wardrobe of the city over a shoulder and, wandering down the Boulevard St. Germain, struck off to the southward. A succession of noisy, squalid villages, such as surround most cities of the old world, lined the way to Mélun. Beyond, tramping was more pleasant, for the route swung off across a rolling country, unadorned with squalling urchins and mongrel curs, towards Fontainebleau. The foot-traveler in France need have no fear of losing his way. From Paris to the important cities and frontier towns radiate "Routes nationales," each known by a certain number throughout its length. Signboards point the way at every cross-road; kilometer posts of white stone keep the wayfarer well informed of the progress he is making — almost too well, for when he has grown foot-sore and ill-tempered, each one greets him with a sardonic smile that says as plainly as words, "Huh! You 're only a kilometer further on, and a kilometer is not a mile by a long way."

They are excellently built, these national highways; the heaviest rain barely forms upon them a perceptible layer of mud. But one could pardon them a little unevenness of road-bed if only they would strike out for their goal with the dogged determination of our own axle-cracking turnpikes. They wind and ramble like mountain streams. They zigzag from village to village even in a level country. The least knoll seems to have been sufficient reason in the minds of the constructing engineers for making wide detours, and where hills abound, there are villages ten miles apart with twenty miles of tramping between them.

Thus far I had tramped the highways of Europe alone. Beyond Nemours, my second night's resting-place, I came upon two wayfarers in the shelter of a giant oak, enjoying a regal repast of hard bread which they rendered more palatable by dipping each mouthful in a brook at their feet. On the plea of an ample breakfast I declined

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"L'Amérique! And being in America you come to France? Oh, mon Dieu, what idiocy!" and waving his arms above his head he fled for the shade of his office.

The ways of my companions would have made them the laughing-stock of American roadsters. They looked forward to no three meals a day. The hope of a "set-down" never intruded upon their field of vision. In fact, they considered that the world was going very well with them if they collected sous enough for one or two lunches of bread and wine daily. Yet wine they would have, except for breakfast, or they refused to eat even bread. Like almost all who tramp any distance in France, they "played the merchant" and were surprised to find that I ventured along the highways of their country without doing likewise. That is, they carried over one shoulder a bundle containing shoe-strings, thread, needles, thimbles, and other articles in demand among rural housewives. The demand was really very light. They *did* make a two or three-sous sale here and there, but the market value of their wares was of least importance. By carrying them, the miners evaded the strict laws against vagrancy. Without the bundles they were beggars, with them they ranked as peddlers. The ruse deceived no one, not even the gendarme. But it satisfied the letter of the law.

Still engrossed in discussing the character of the officer who had delayed us, we reached a large farmhouse. With one of the miners I lingered at the roadside. The other entered the dwelling, ostensibly to display his wares. A moment later he emerged with a half-loaf of coarse peasant's bread. Madame had needed nothing from his pack, but "she made me a present of this lump."

It was while they were canvassing a village in quest of sales, or crusts, in the dusk of evening that I lost sight of the miners. I had passed the village inn, and, being always averse to retracing my steps, continued my way alone. Had I suspected the distance to the next hamlet, I might have been less eager to press on. Fully three hours later I stumbled into Les Bussières and, having walked sixty-nine kilometers, it was not strange that I slept late next morning. Besides, the day was Sunday, and what with satisfying the curiosity of a company of peasants in the wine-room and drinking the health of several of them, I did not set out until the day was well advanced. Beyond the village stretched the broad, white route, endless and deserted. The long journey before me would have been less lonely in

the company of the miners; but we had parted and I plodded on in solitude, wondering when I should again fall in with so cheery a pair.

In passing a clump of trees at the roadside, I was suddenly roused from my revery by a shout of "Holà! L'américain!" What could have betrayed my nationality? I halted and stared about me. My eyes fell on the grove and I beheld my companions of the day before hastily gathering their possessions together.

We journeyed along as before, producing our papers at each village and being once stopped in the open country by a mounted gendarme. The miners played in poor luck all through the morning. A single sou and an aged quarter-loaf constituted their gleanings. Gaunt hunger was depicted on their countenances before we reached Briare in the early afternoon and, breaking the silence of an hour, I offered to stand the *compte* of a meal for three.

There was in Briare, as in every town in France larger than a hamlet, an inn the proprietor of which catered to the vagabond class. None but a native tramp could have found the establishment without repeated inquiries; but the miners, needing no second invitation and guided by some peculiar instinct, led the way down a side street and into a squalid cul de sac. The most acute foreign eye would have seen only frowning back walls, but my companions pushed open the door of what looked like a deserted warehouse and we entered a low room, gloomy and unswept. Around the table, to which we made our way through a very forest of huge wine-barrels, were gathered a dozen peasants and a less solemn pair who turned out to be of "the profession."

The first greetings over, the keeper set out before us a loaf of coarse bread and a bottle of wine, demanded immediate payment, and having received it, resumed his seat on a barrel. His shop was, in reality, the wine cellar of a café the gilded façade of which faced the main street. In it the liquor that sold here for four sous the litre would have cost us a half-franc. One of the miners, having gained my consent to the extravagance, invested two sous in raw, salt pork which he and his companion ate with great relish. I was content to do without such delicacies, for the wine and bread made a very appetizing feast after hours of trudging under a broiling sun.

In the course of the afternoon I photographed the miners, a proceeding which caused them infantine delight, both declaring that this was the first time in their begrimed existence that they had ever

Canal-boats laden with lumber from Nièvre entering Paris

"They are excellently built, the Routes Nationales of France"

been *tirés*. We found lodging in a peasant's wheat stack. I was a bit chary of spending the night in so deserted a spot with two such vagabonds, for the kodak and the handful of coins from which I had paid for our dinner was a plunder worth a roadster's conspiracy. My anxiety was really ungrounded. Morning broke with my possessions intact and, after an hour's work in picking straw and chaff from our hair and clothing, we set off at sunrise.

I left my companions behind soon after, for their mode of travel resulted in far less than the thirty miles a day I had cut out for myself, and passed on into the vineyard and forest country of Nièvre. Harvest was over in the few fertile farms that were not given up to the culture of the grape; the day of the gleaners had come. In the fields left bare by the reapers, peasant women gathered with infinite care the stray wheat stalks and, their aprons full, plodded homeward. To the thrifty French mind there is nothing so iniquitous as to waste the smallest thing of value. Before this army of bowed backs one could not but wonder whether it had ever occurred to them that labor also may be wasted.

The most extravagant of its inhabitants were already lighting their lamps when I entered the village of La Charité. To whatever benevolence the quiet hamlet owes its name, it was typical of those rural communities that line the highways of France. A decrepit grey church raised a time-mellowed voice in the song of the evening angelus. Squat housewives gossiped at the doors of the drab stone cottages lining the route. From the neighboring fields heavy ox-carts, the yokes fastened across the horns of the animals, lumbered homeward. In the dwindling light a blacksmith before his open shop was fitting with flat, iron shoes a piebald ox triced up on his back in a frame.

In lieu of the familiar sign, *Ici on loge à pied et à cheval,* the village inn was distinguished from the private dwellings by a bundle of dried fagots over the door. I entered, to find myself in a room well-stocked with wooden tables, with here and there a trio of villagers, over their wine and cards, blowing smoke at the unhewn beams of the ceiling. In answer to the customary signal, the tapping of pipes on the tables, an elderly woman appeared and inquired bruskly wherein she could serve me.

"You have lodgings, n'est-ce pas?"

A sudden, startling silence greeted the first suggestion of foreign accent. Cards paused in mid-air, pipes ceased to draw, tipplers craned their necks to listen, and madame surveyed me deliberately, even a

bit disdainfully, from crown to toe. Satisfied evidently, with her inspection, she admitted that she had been known to house travelers and hurried away to bring the register, while the smoking and the drinking and the playing were slowly and half-heartedly resumed. Madame scrutinized intently each stroke of the coarse pen as I filled in the various blanks, puzzled several moments over my "passport," and dropping all her stiff dignity, became suddenly garrulous:

"What! You are an American? Why, another American has lodged here. It was in 1882. He was making the tour of the world on a bicycle. He came from Boston"—she pronounced it with a distressing nasal—"but I could not understand his French. He did not pronounce the R. He said 'foncé' when he meant 'français.' for 'terre' he said 'tèah.' I will give you his bed. He had not many hairs on his head. Do you eat ragoût also in America? He wore such funny pince-nez. Fine wine, n'est-ce pas? He had hurt his foot—" and thus she chattered on, through my supper and up the stairs to my chamber.

The room once graced by the man from Boston was stone-floored, with whitewashed walls, and large enough to have housed a squad of infantry. Of its two beds, hung with snow-white curtains, I preferred the one nearer the window. Unfortunately, my compatriot of the pince-nez had chosen the other and madame would not hear of my violating the precedent thus established. The price of this lodging, and the usual one in the rural inns of France, was fifteen cents.

There were times when my zealous efforts to spend for lodging as few sous as possible brought me to temporary grief. The night following my sojourn in La Charité is a case in point. I reached St. Pierre le Moutier some time after dark, and, upon inquiry for the cheapest auberge, was directed up a dismal alleyway. On the fringe of the open country I stumbled upon a ramshackle stone building, one end of which was a dwelling for man, while the other housed his domestic animals. Inside, under a sputtering excuse for a lamp, huddled two men, a woman and a girl, around a table that canted up against the wall as if it had borne too much wine in its long existence and become chronically unsteady on its legs thereby. So preoccupied was the quartet in devouring slabs of dull-brown bread and a watery soup from a common bowl in which floated a few stray cabbage-leaves that my entrance passed unnoticed.

Advancing to attract attention I brought disaster. For in the semi-darkness I stepped on the end of a board that supported two legs of

the tipsy table, causing the bowl of soup to slide into the woman's arms, and the loaf to roll about on the earth floor. The mishap, evidently no new experience, aroused no comment, but it gained me a hearing and brought me into the conversation. Of the two men, one was the proprietor and the second a traveler of the tramp variety who, though posing as a Parisian, spoke a decidedly mongrel language. With the fluency of a stranded tragedian he launched forth in a raging narration of his misfortunes. French at all resembling the educated tongue had become as familiar to me as English, but the patois and slang in which the fellow unfolded the story of a persecuted life would have daunted an international interpreter. I caught the drift of his remarks by making him repeat each sentence twice or thrice, but he ended with a: "Heing! Tu comprinds ma'reux le frinçais;" and I was forced to admit that if the jargon he got off were "frinçais," I certainly did.

The younger, and consequently less begrimed of the females, led the way to my "room," which turned out to be a hole over the stable, some four feet high, approached by an outside stairway, and containing two of the filthiest cots a vivid imagination could have pictured. To my disgust I found that one of the beds was reserved for my friend of the uncouth tongue. A half-hour later, unstable after a final bottle of wine with the *aubergiste,* he stumbled into the den and proceeded to make night hideous — awake, by his multiloquence, asleep, by a rasping snore. A dozen times I awoke from a half-conscious nap to find him sitting cross-legged in his cot, puffing furiously at a cigarette, above the feeble glow of which glistened his cat-like eyes as he stared at me across the intervening darkness. At daybreak he was gone and I departed soon after.

There is really no reason why the French roadster should go hungry in autumn. That he does, is due to a strange national prejudice unknown in America; for at that season half the highways of France are lined with hedges heavy with blackberries. At first I looked with suspicion on a fruit left ungathered by the thrifty peasantry, but, coming one morning upon a hedge unusually burdened with berries, I satisfied myself as to their identity and fell to picking a capful. A band of peasants, on the way to the fields, halted to gaze at me in astonishment and burst into uproarious laughter.

"Mais, mon vieux," cried a plowman. "Que diable vas tu faire de ces choses-là?"

"Eat them, of course," I answered.

"Eat them!" roared the peasants, "but those things are not good to eat," and the notion struck them as so droll that their guffaws still came back to me long after they had turned a bend in the highway. Every Frenchman I approached on the subject held the same view. The two miners traveled for hours with a gnawing hunger, or invaded lonely vineyards at imminent risk of capture by the rural gendarmerie, to eat their fill of half-ripe grapes, sour and acrid. But when I, from my safe position outside the hedge, held up a heavily-laden bush, their answer was always the same: "Ah, non, mon vieux. Not any for me." Obviously I could not regret the bad repute in which the fruit was held, for when hunger overtook me I had but to stop and pick my dinner, and except for the few sous spent for bread and wine, my rations from Fontainebleau to the Swiss frontier cost me nothing.

My tramp continued past Nevers and Moulin, down through the department of Allier to the city of Roanne, stretching along both banks of the upper Loire. A few kilometers beyond, the highway began a winding ascent of the first foot-hills of the Alps. Even here the cultivation bespoke the thrift of the French peasant. Far up the rugged hillside stretched terraced farms, each stone-faced step of the broad stairways thickly set with grapevines. Higher still a few wrinkled patches in sheltered ravines gave sustenance to the most sturdy toilers. Here it is that may be seen the nearest prototype of that painful figure known far and wide, that stolid being who leans on his mattock, gazing helplessly away into meaningless space; nearest, because his exact original no longer dwells in the fields of France: he has moved southward. Down a glen below the highway the trunk of a tree, broken off some six feet above the ground and with a huge knot on one side, stood out in silhouette against the distant horizon. But for a crudeness of outline one might have imagined the stump a clumsy, ragged peasant, with a child astride his shoulders. I stood surveying this figure, wondering what forces of the elements could have given a mere tree so strange a likeness to a human form, when it suddenly started, moved, and strode away across the gully.

The highway continued to climb. The patches of tilled ground gave way to waving forests where sounded the twittering of birds, and here and there the cheery song of the woodsman or shepherd boy. Some magic there is inherent in the clear air of mountain heights tha calls forth song from those that dwell among them.

With sunset came the summit. The road began to descend, the forests fell away, the tiny fields appeared once more, and the ballad

A typical French roadster who has tramped the highways of Europe for thirty years

The two French miners with whom I tramped in France.
Notice shoe-laces carried for sale

of the mountaineer was silent. A colony of laborers, engaged in the construction of a reservoir, gave me greeting from the doors of their temporary shacks, and lower still I turned in at an auberge half-filled with a squad of soldiers.

He is an interesting figure, the French conscript. In his makeup is none of the boisterous braggadocio of the American trooper and of Tommy Atkins, never that scorn for civilians so often characteristic of the voluntary, the mercenary soldier. He feels small inclination to boast of his wisdom even in military matters, for well he knows that the jolly innkeeper may be able to tell a tale of his own days *sous le drapeau* that makes the conscript's favorite story weak and insipid by comparison. Then, too, it is hard to be boastful when one is sad at heart; and the French conscript is not happy. To him conscription is a yoke, akin to disease and death, which fate has fastened upon the children of men. He dreads its coming, serves under unexpressed protest, and sets it down in his book of life as three years utterly lost.

There is, indeed, a note of pessimism everywhere prevalent among the masses of France. It is not a universal note, not even a constant one: loud-voiced "calamity-howlers" are less in evidence than in our own optimistic land. But even amid the merry chatter there hovers over every gathering of French workmen a gloominess, an infestivity that speaks of lost hope, of fatalistic despair. Briefly and unconsciously, a craftsman of chance acquaintance summed up this inner feeling of his class: "Ah, mon pauvre pays," he sighed, "elle n'est plus ce qu'elle était."

Chattering groups of Lyonese, mounting to the freer air of the hills in Sunday attire, enlivened my morning tramp down the descending highway. By early afternoon I came in sight of the second city of France and the confluence of the Soâne and Rhône. The vineyards ceased, to give place to mulberry trees. Even on this day of merry-making the whir of silk-looms sounded from the wayside cottages, well into the suburbs of the city. The humble dwellings were succeeded by mansions; the national highway, by a broad boulevard that led down to the meeting-place of the two rivers, and the first stage of my journey to southern Europe was ended.

From Lyon I turned northeastward towards Geneva and the Alps. A serpentine route climbed upward. Often I tramped for hours around the edge of a yawning chasm, having always in view a rugged village and its vineyards far below, only to find myself at the end of that time within stone's throw of a long-forgotten kilometer-post.

Near the frontier hovered a general air of suspicion. The aubergiste of the mountain hamlet of Moulin Chabaud hesitated long and studied every dot and letter of my papers before offering me a chair under the big fireplace; he remained surly and distraught all through the evening, as if convinced in spite of himself that he was harboring one whose career had not been unsullied. When I awoke, a mountain rain was falling, cold and ceaseless; but preferring always a certain amount of physical discomfort to sour looks, I pushed on, splashing into Geneva long after nightfall.

It would doubtless require a frequent repetition of such experiences to stifle that indefinable dread, akin to fear, which oppresses the weary pedestrian who, entirely unbefriended, enters an unknown city in the darkness of night. Limping aimlessly through the streets of Geneva in my water-soaked garments, I felt particularly dismal and forlorn. Genevese, huddled under their umbrellas, pushed me aside when I attempted to speak to them or snapped a few incoherent words over their shoulders. In vain I attempted to escape from the district of jewellers' shops and watch-makers' show-windows, little suspecting that I was virtually on an island given over almost entirely to business houses and rich dwellings.

A slippery street led to a bridge across the Rhône, and a policeman beyond pointed out the district gendarmerie as the proper place to prosecute my inquiries. From a window of the building shown a dim light, and within sounded a brisk "entrez" in answer to my knock. Two police sergeants, engrossed in a game of cards, turned to scowl at me across the room.

"Eh bien, toi! Qu'est-ce qu'il y a?"

"I am looking for a lodging house and the policeman —"

"Lodging! At this time of night? Do you think the city provides a hotel de luxe for vagabonds, that they may come and go at any hour — ?"

"But I intend to pay my own lodging."

"Pay! Quoi! Tu as de l'argent?"

"Certainly I have money!" I cried indignantly, though to tell the truth the weight of it was not making me stoop-shouldered.

"Ah!" gasped the senior officer, speaking the word high up in his mouth after the fashion of Frenchmen expressing supreme astonishment. "Que je vous aie mal jugé! I thought you were asking admittance to the night shelter."

The shock of hearing one he had taken for a vagabond admit that

he had money was clearly a unique experience in the sergeant's constabulary career. He had by no means recovered when I turned away to the inn he had pointed out.

Three days later I boarded a steamer that zigzagged between the cities flanking blue Lac Léman, and descending at Villeneuve, set out along the valley of the upper Rhône. Here all was free and open as the mountains bordering the fertile strip, for the close-hedged fields of France are not to the taste of the Swiss peasant. No gendarme waylaid me at each hamlet; I had but to step off the highway to gather apples under the trees or to escape from the glaring sun.

Night overtook me at St. Maurice, a sure-footed mountain village, straddling the Rhône where it roars through a narrow gorge on its way to the lake beyond. Even within doors the villagers speak a high-pitched treble, so fixed has become the habit of raising their voices above the constant boom of the cataract. In my lodging directly above, the roaring intruded on my dreams, and in fancy I struggled against the rushing current that carried me down a sheer mountainside.

Church-bound peasants fell in with me along the route next morning, peasants lacking both the noisy gaiety of the French and the gloominess of the Sunday-clad German. Wayside wine-shops, or a pace too rapid for a day of rest cut short my acquaintance with each group, but I had not far to plod alone before the curiosity of a new band gave me companionship for another space.

At Martigny the highway bent with the river to the eastward; the mountain wall crowded more closely the narrow valley, pushing the road to the edge of the stream that mirrored the rugged peaks. Here and there a foot-hill boldly detached itself from the range, and taking its stand in the valley, drove off the route on a winding detour.

Two such hills gave Sion a form all its own. An ample Paradplatz in the foreground held back the jumble of houses tossed upon an undulating hillside. Back of the village, like gaunt sentinels guarding the valley of the upper Rhône, stood two towering rocks, the one crowned by the ruins of an ancient castle, the other by a crumbling church that gazed scornfully down on the jostling buildings of modern times. A Sunday festival was raging on the parade-ground. Around the booths and puppet-shows surged merry countrymen in gay attire; from the flanking shops hung streamers and the flags of many nations.

I had barely reached the town when a rumble of thunder sounded. Dense, black clouds, flying before a wind that did not reach us in the

valley, appeared from the north, tearing themselves on the jagged peaks above. Close on the heels of the warning a storm broke in true Alpine fury. The festooned multitude broke madly for the shelter of the shops, the gaudy streamers and booths turned to drooping rags, the puppets humped their shoulders appealingly, and the parade-ground became a shallow lake that reflected a bright sun ten minutes after the first growl of thunder.

The oppressive heat tempered by the shower, I rounded the greater of the sentinel rocks and continued up the valley. Rolling vineyards stretched away on either hand to the brink of the river or the base of the enclosing mountains. A burning thirst assailed me. Almost unconsciously I paused and picked two clusters of plump grapes that hung over the stone coping of a field above the highway.

A stone's throw ahead, two men stepped suddenly from behind a clump of bushes and strolled towards me.

"Do you know what that is?" demanded one of them, in French, as he waved a small badge before my eyes.

I certainly did. It was the official shield of the rural gendarmerie.

"Yes," I admitted.

"Back you go with us to Sion!" roared the officer. He was a lean, lank giant who, evidently in virtue of his length, assumed the position of spokesman. His companion, almost a dwarf, nodded his head vigorously in approval.

"Eh bien?" I answered, too weary to argue the matter.

"Yes," blustered the spokesman, "back to Sion and the magistrate —" he paused, squinted at the dwarf, and went on in dulcet tones, "unless you pay thirty francs."

"Thirty francs! Where on earth should I get thirty francs?" In my excitement I somewhat bungled my French.

"Where go you?" asked the pocket edition of the law. His voice was soothing and he spoke in German.

"To Italy. I am a workman."

"Ja! Und in deinem Lande — in your land you may pick grapes when you like, *was?*" shouted the long one.

"A couple of bunches? Of course!"

"*Was!* In Italien?" In his voice was all the sarcasm he could call up from a tolerably caustic nature.

"I am no Italian. I come from the United States."

"United States!" bellowed the gendarme, looking around at his companion. "What is this United States?"

"Ah-er-well, there *is* such a country," suggested the midget, "but —"

"And in this country of yours you do not speak French, nor German, nor yet Italian?" snapped the officer, relapsing unconsciously into French.

"No, we speak English."

"Mille diables! English! What then is that?"

"Ja. Es gibt so eine Sprache," ventured the dwarf.

The spokesman ignored him.

"Well, pay fifteen francs and we have seen nothing."

"Impossible."

"Then back to Sion and the gendarmerie."

"Very well, en route."

The pair scowled and turned aside to whisper together. The tall one continued, "My comrade says, as you are a pauvre diable on foot — five francs."

"Five francs for two bunches of grapes, comme ça?" I gasped holding them out.

"Ach! Ein, unglücklicher Kerl," urged the dwarf. "Say three francs."

"No!" I cried, "C'en est trop. Two bunches, like that? I have here two francs —"

The leader shook his head, glanced at his mate, and took several steps in the direction of Sion.

"Ah! A poor devil on the road," breathed the other.

"Well, two it is," growled the moving spirit.

I took two francs from my pocket and dropped them into the outstretched palm. The officer jingled the coins a moment, handed one to his companion, and pocketed the other with the air of a man who had well performed an unpleasant duty. His threatening scowl had vanished and a smile played on his lean face.

"Merci," he said, dropping his shield into a side pocket and turning back -place, "au revoir, monsieur!" And the small man, n his heels, turned to add, "Bon voyage, monsieur

to the dusk, eating the high-priced grapes, and won- e the owner of the vineyard entered into the trans-

r the treacherous clump of bushes I passed the un- between French and German Switzerland. Thus far

the former tongue had reigned supreme, though pedestrians often greeted me with "Bon jour," "Guten Tag." But the voice of the street in Sierre, where I halted for the night, was overwhelmingly Teutonic, and the signs over hospitable doors no longer read "auberge," but "Wirtschaft" and "Bierhalle." There I lay late abed next morning, and once off, strolled leisurely along the fertile valley, for a bare twenty miles separated the town from Brieg, at the foot of the Simplon pass.

You who turn in each evening at the selfsame threshold, you who huddle in your niche among the cave-dwellers of great cities, you who race through foreign lands in car and carriage as if fearful of setting foot on an alien soil, can know nothing of the exhilaration that comes in tramping mile after mile of open country when life blooms forth in its prime on every hand. A single day afoot brings delight. Yet only he who looks day after day on an ever-changing scene, who passes on and ever on into the great Weltraum that stretches unendingly before him, can feel the full strength of the Wanderlust within. To stop seems an irreverence, to turn back a sacrilege. In these days of splendid transportation we lose much that our forefathers enjoyed. There is a sense of satisfaction akin to self-pride, a sense of real accomplishment that thrills the pedestrian who has attained a distant goal through his own unaided efforts, a satisfaction which the traveler by steam cannot experience.

The highway over the Simplon, constructed by Napoleon in 1805, is still, in spite of the encroachment of railways, a well-traveled route, though not by pedestrians. The good people of Brieg burst forth in wailing sympathy when I divulged my plan of crossing on foot. Traffic between the village and Domo d'Ossola in Piedmont has for generations been monopolized by a line of stage-coaches. There was more than the exhilaration of such a tramp, however, to awaken my revolt against this time-honored means of transportation, for the fare on one of these primitive bone-shakers ranged from forty to fifty francs.

With a vagrant's lunch in my knapsack I left Brieg
first tramontane hamlet was thirty miles distant. Be
the morning stage rattled by and the jeering of its d
on. The highway showed nowhere a really steep
mounted seven thousand feet in twenty-three kilomet
turn of the route the panorama grew. Three hou
peeped out through the slender *Tannenbäume,* far b

directly beneath; and the vista extended far down the winding valley of the Rhône, back to the sentinel rocks of Sion and beyond. Across the chasm sturdy mountaineers scrambled from rock to boulder with their sheep and goats, as high as grew the hardiest sprig of vegetation. Far above the last shrub, ragged, barren peaks cut from the blue sky beyond figures of fantastic shape; peaks aglow with nature's most lavish coloring, here one deep purple in the morning shade, there another, with basic tone of ruddy pink changed like watered silk under the reflection of the rays that gilded its summit.

Beyond the spot where Brieg was lost to view began the *réfuges,* roadside cottages in which the traveler, overcome by fatigue or the raging storms of winter, may seek shelter. In this summer season, however, they had degenerated one and all into dirty wine-shops where squalling children and stray goats wandered about among the tables. I peered in at one and inquired the price of a bottle of wine. A spidery female rose up to fleece me of my slender hoard and I beat a hasty retreat, thankful to have come prepared against the call of hunger, and content to drink the crystalline water of wayside streams.

The roadway found scant footing in the upper ranges, and burrowed its way through several tunnels. High above one of them a glacier sent down a roaring torrent sheer over the route, and through an opening in the outer wall of the subtorrential gallery one could reach out and touch the foaming stream as it plunged into the abyss far below.

Light clouds, that had obscured the sterile peaks during the last hours of the ascent, all but caused me to pass unnoticed the hospice of St. Bernard that marks the summit. I stepped inside to write a postal to the world below, and turned out again into a drizzling rain that soon became a steady downpour. But the kilometers that had been so long in the morning fairly raced by on the downward journey, and a few hours brought me to the frontier.

As if fearful of losing sovereignty over a foot of her territory, Italy has set a guard-house exactly over the boundary line, amid wild rocks and gorges. A watchful soldier stepped out into the storm and hailed me while several yards of Switzerland still lay between us:

"Any tobacco or cigars?"

I fished out a half-used package of Swiss tobacco, wet and mushy. The officer waved a deprecatory hand.

"What's this?" he demanded, tapping the pocket that held my kodak.

"A picture machine," I explained, showing an edge of the apparatus.

"Bene, buona sera," cried the officer, as he ran for his shelter.

At nightfall I splashed into the scraggy village of Iselle. From a yawning hole in the mountainside poured forth a regiment of laborers who scurried towards a long row of improvised shanties, hanging, on the edge of nothing, over a rushing mountain river. Having once been a "mud-mucker" in my own land, I followed after, and struck up several acquaintanceships over the evening macaroni. The band was engaged in boring a tunnel, thirteen miles in length, from Brieg to Iselle. With its completion the Simplon tourist will avoid the splendid scenery of the pass; the stagecoaches will be consigned to the scrap-heaps they should long since have adorned; and an hour, robbed of sunshine and pure air, will separate Italy from the valley of the Rhône. Then will the transalpine voyager degenerate into the subalpine passenger.

CHAPTER III

TRAMPING IN ITALY

THERE was next morning nothing to recall the dismal weather of the day before except the deep mud of the highway and my garments, still dripping wet when I drew them on. The vine-covered hillsides and rolling plains below, the lizards basking on every rock and ledge, peasant women plodding barefooted along the route gave to the land an aspect far different from that of the valley of the Rhône. It was hard to realize that the open fields and chilling night winds of Switzerland were not hundreds of miles away, but just behind the flanking range.

The French and German that had so long served me must now give place to my none too fluent Italian. In the grey old town of Domo d'Ossola I halted at a booth to buy a box of matches.

"Avete allumette?" I demanded of the brown-visaged matron in charge.

I have always had an unconquerable feeling that the French "allumette" ought really to be an Italian word; but my attempt to introduce it into that language failed dismally.

"Cose sono allumette?" croaked the daughter of Italy, with such overdrawn sarcasm that it was all too evident that she understood the term, but did not propose to admit any knowledge of the despised *francese* tongue.

"Fiammiferi, voglio dire," I replied, recalling the correct word.

"Ah! Ecco!" cried the matron, handing me a box with her blandest smile.

I quickly discovered, too, that the language of the Divine Comedy was not the one in which to make known my simple wants. But being more familiar with the phraseology of the famous Florentine than with the speech of the masses, I found myself, in those first days in the peninsula, prone to converse in poetrics despite a very prosaic temperament. As when, in the outskirts of Domo d'Ossola, I turned to a chestnut vendor at a fork in the road, and pointing up one of the branches, demanded:

"Ah! — er — Perme si va nella città dol — Confound it, no, I mean is this the road to Varese?"

To which the native, to whose lips was mounting a "non capisc'" at sound of the Dantesque phrase, answered in a twinkling:

"Di s'guro, s'gnor', semp' dritt!"

Across northern Italy, almost in a straight line, are scattered several famous cities, all invaded by the broad highway that leads from the Simplon to Venice. Most beautiful among them is Pallanza, a village paradise on the shore of Lago Maggiore, in the lakeside groves of which I should have tarried longer but for the recollection of how wide the world is to the impecunious wayfarer. I fished out, therefore, from the bin of a second-hand book dealer a ragged Baedeker in French, and, thus armed with a more trustworthy source of information than dull-eyed peasants, boarded the steamer that connected the broken ends of the highway. During the short journey a band of English tourists sauntered about on the deck above me, and my native tongue, unheard since Paris and not to be heard again until — well, until long after, sounded almost foreign to my ears.

Beyond Varese next morning, within sight of five snow-capped peaks of the range I had crossed three days before, I espied from afar the white sun-shields of two officers, armed with muskets, and marching westward. Anticipating a quizzing, I turned aside from the sun-scorched route and awaited their coming in a shaded spot. Strange to say, in this land burdened with a tax on salt and an unholy visitation of soldiers and priests, vagrants enjoy far more liberty than in France. Thus far the indifference of the gendarmerie had been so marked that I had come to feel neglected. Yet tramps abounded. This very freedom makes Italy a favorite land among the *Handwerksgesellen* of Switzerland, Germany, and Austria, many of whom I had already met, marching southward full of Wanderlust, or crawling homeward with bitter stories of the miseries of the peninsula.

The *carabinieri,* spick and span of uniform, their swords rattling egotistically on the roadway, drew near, and, stepping into the shade, opened a conversation that needs no translation.

"Di dove siete?"

"Di America, dei Stati Uniti."

"Di America! Ma! E dove andate?"

"A Venezia."

"Ma! Come! A piedi?"

"Di siguro. Come volete che fare?"

"Ma! Perche andare a Venezia?"

"Sono marinaio."

"Ah! Marinaio! Bene!" and without even calling for my papers they strutted on along the highway.

A wonderful word is this Italian "ma." Let not the uninitiated suppose that the term designates a maternal ancestor. But — and that is its real meaning — it is a useful vocable and like all useful things is greatly overworked. If an Italian of the masses wishes to express disgust, surprise, resignation, depression of spirits, or any one of a score of other impressions, he has merely to say "ma" with the corresponding accentuation and timbre and his hearers know his opinion exactly. It takes the place of our "All right!" "Hurry up!" "Quit it!" "Let 'er go!" "The devil he did!" "Rot!" "Dew tell!" "Cuss the luck!" "Nuff said!" "D—n it!" and there its meanings by no means cease.

Poverty stalks abroad in Italy. Even in this richer northern section it required no telescope to make out its gaunt and furrowed features. Ragged children quarrelled for the possession of an apple-core thrown by the wayside; the rolling fields were alive with barefooted women toiling like demon-driven serfs. A sparrow could not have found sustenance behind the gleaners. In wayside orchards men armed with grain-sacks stripped even the trees of their leaves; for what purpose was not evident, though the beds to which I was assigned in village inns suggested a possible solution of the problem.

The peasant of these parts possesses three beasts of burden: a team of gaunt white oxen — or cows — an undersized ass, and his wife. Of the three, the last is most useful. The husbandman does not load his hay on wagons; a few blades might fall by the wayside. He ties it carefully in small bundles, piles them high above the baskets strapped on the backs of his helpmeet, and drives her off to the village, often miles distant. They are loads which the American workman would refuse to carry — so does the Italian for that matter; but the highway is animate with what look, at a distance, like wandering haystacks, from beneath which, on nearer approach, peer women, or half-grown girls, whose drawn and haggard faces might have served as models to those artists who have depicted on canvas the beings of Dante's hell.

A traveler, ignorant of Italian, wandering into Como at my heels on that sweltering afternoon, would have been justified in supposing that the advance agent of a circus had preceded him. Had he taken the

trouble to engage an interpreter, however, he would have learned that a more serious catastrophe had befallen. The very night before a longed-hoped-for heir to the throne of Vittore Emanuele had dropped into his reserved seat on the neck of the Italian tax-payer. On the city gate, on house-walls everywhere, on the very façade of the cathedral, great, paste-sweating placards announced the casuality in flaunting head-lines, and a greater aggregation of adjectives than would be required in our own over-postered land to call public attention to the merits of Chow Chow Chewing Gum, or the Yum Yum Burlesque Company. Worst of all, the manifesto ended, not with expressions of condolence to the proletariat, but with a command to swear at once loyalty and fealty to "Il Principe di Piemonte." Everywhere jostling groups were engrossed in spelling out the proclamation; but it was quite possible to pass through the streets of Como without being trampled under foot by its citizens in their mad rush to carry out the royal order.

Nightfall found me in quest of a lodging in Pusiano, a lakeside village midway between Como and Lecco. It was no easy task. The *alberghi* of Italy — but why generalize? They are all tarred with the same stick. The proprietor, then, of the Pusiano hostelry, relying for his custom on those who know every in and out of the town, had not gone to the expense of erecting a sign. I found, after long and diligent search, the edifice that included the public resort under its roof; but as the inn had no door opening on the street, I was still faced with the problem of finding the entrance. Of two dark passages and a darker stairway before me, it was a question which was most suggestive of pitfalls set for unwary travelers, and of dank, underground dungeons. I plunged into one of the tunnels with my hands on the defensive; which was fortunate, for I brought up against a stone wall. The second passage ended as abruptly. I approached the stairway stealthily; stumbled up the stone steps, over a stray cat and a tin pan, and into the common room of the Pusiano inn — common because it served as kitchen, dining-room, parlor, and office.

My wants made known, the proprietor half rose to his feet, sat down again, and motioned me to a seat. I took a place opposite him on one of the two benches inside the fire-place, partly because it had been raining outside, but chiefly on account of an absence of chairs that left me no choice in the matter. Shrouded in silence I filled my pipe. The landlord handed me a glowing coal in his fingers and dropped back on his bench without once subduing his stare. His wife

wandered in and placed several pots and kettles around the fire that toasted our heels. Still not a word. I leaned back and, gazing upward, watched as much of the smoke as could find no other vent pass up the chimney. Now and then a drop of rain fell with a hiss on pan or kettle.

"Not nice weather," grinned the landlord, and the ice thus broken, we were soon engaged in animated conversation. Too animated in fact, for in emphasizing some opinion mine host had the misfortune to kick over a kettle of boiling macaroni and was banished from the chimney corner by a raging spouse. Being less given to pedal gesticulation, I kept my place, and strove to answer the questions which the exile fired at me across the room.

By meal time several natives had dropped in, and our party at table grew garrulous and in time so numerous that to serve us became a serious problem to the hostess, who was neither lithe nor quick of movement. The supper began with *una minestra,* a plate of soup containing some species of macaroni and, as usual in these cheap alberghi, several species of scrap-iron. Then a bit of meat was doled out, somewhat to my surprise; for the price of this article is so high in Italy that a stew of kidneys, liver, sheep's head, or fat-covered entrails is often the only offering. He who has the temerity and a heavy enough purse to order a cutlet or a *bistecca* in such an inn is looked upon with awe and envy as long as he remains. I seldom had either.

Following the meat dish — it is never served with it — came a bowl of vegetables, then a bit of fruit and a nibble of cheese for each of us. Wine, of course, had been much in evidence; the Italian has no conception of a meal without his national drink. The wayfarer may call for nothing to eat but the three-cent minestra, and la signora serves it as cheerily as a dinner at one lira; but let him refuse to order wine, and her sympathy is forever forfeited. When drowsiness fell upon me the hostess led the way to an airy, spacious room, its bed boasting a lace canopy, and its coarse sheets remarkably white in view of the fact that the Italian housewife does her work in the village brook, and never uses hot water. Such labor is cheap in the peninsula and for all this luxury I paid less than ten cents.

Early next day I pushed on toward Lecco. A light frost had fallen during the night, and the peasants, alarmed at this first breath of winter, had sent into the vineyards every man, woman, and child capable of labor. The pickers worked feverishly. All day women plodded from the fields to the roadside with great buckets of grapes to be

dumped into hogsheads on waiting ox-carts. Men, booted or shod with wooden clogs, jumped now and then into the barrels and stamped the grapes down. Once full, the receptacles were covered with strips of dirty canvas, the *contadino* mounted his cart, turned his oxen into the highway, and fell promptly asleep. Arrived at the village, he drew up before the chute of the communal wine-press and shoveled his grapes into a slowly-revolving hopper, from which, crushed to an oozy pulp, they were run into huge vats and left to settle.

Halting for a morning lunch in the shadow of the statue of Manzoni, I rounded that range of mountains, so strangely resembling a saw, which shelters Lecco from the east wind, and continuing through the theater of action of "I Promessi Sposi," gained Bergamo by nightfall. Beyond that city a level highway set an unchanging course across a vast, grape-bearing plain, watered by a network of canals. The Alps retired slowly to the northward until, at Brescia, only a phantom range wavered in the haze of the distant horizon.

About the time of my arrival in Italy, a strike had been declared in Milan. The Milanese motormen had refused to groom their horses or something of the sort. Once started, the movement was rapidly growing general and wide-spread. The newspapers bubbled over with it, the air about me was surcharged with raging arraignments of capitalistic iniquities. Strikes and lock-outs, however, were no affairs to trouble the peace of a foot-traveler. When trains ceased to run, I marched serenely on through clamoring groups of stranded voyagers; when the barbers closed their shops, I decided to raise a beard. The butchers joined the movement and I smiled with the indifference of one who had subsisted for weeks chiefly on bread.

The bakers of northern Italy concoct this important comestible in loaves of about the size and durability of baseballs. Serving in that capacity there is good reason to believe that one of them would remain unscathed at the end of a league game, though the score-book recorded many a three-bagger and home-run. Still, hard loaves soaked in wine, or crushed between two wayside rocks were edible, in a way; and, as long as they were plentiful, I could not suffer for lack of food.

A few miles beyond Brescia, however, the strike became a matter of personal importance. At each of the bakeries of a grumbling village I was turned away with the cry of: —

"Pane non ch'è! The strike! The bakers have joined the strike and no more bread is made!"

To satisfy that day's appetite I was reduced to "paste," a mushy mess of macaroni; and at a Verona inn I was robbed of half my sleep by the discussion of this new phase of the situation, that roared in the kitchen until long after midnight.

I was returning across the piazza next morning, from an early view of the picturesque bridges and the ancient Colosseum of Verona, when I fell upon a howling mob at the gateway of the city hall. Joining the throng, I soon gained an inner courtyard, to find what seemed to be half the population of Verona quarreling, pushing, and scratching in a struggle to reach the gate of a large wicket that shut off one end of the square. Behind it, just visible above the intervening sea of heads, appeared the top of some massive instrument, and the caps of a squad of policemen. I inquired of an excited neighbor the cause of the squabble. He glowered at me and howled something in reply, the only intelligible word of which was "pane" (bread). I turned to a man behind me. He took advantage of my movement to shove me aside and crowd into my place, at the same time vociferating "pane!" I tried to oust the usurper. He jabbed me twice in the ribs with his elbows, and again roared "pane." In fact, everywhere above the howl and blare of the multitude, one word rang out clear and sharp —"pane! pane! pane!" Sad experiences of the day before, and the anticipation of the long miles of highway before me, had aroused my interest in that commodity. I dived into the human whirlpool and set out to battle my way towards the vortex.

With all its noise and bluster, an Italian crowd does not know the rudiments of football. Even the wretch who had dispossessed me of my first vantage-ground was far behind when I reached the front rank and paused to survey the scene of conflict. Inside the wicket a dozen perspiring policemen were guarding several huge baskets of that baseball bread already mentioned. Beyond them stood the instrument that had attracted my attention — a pair of wooden scales that looked fully capable of giving the avoirdupois of an ox. Still further on, an officer, whose expression suggested that he was recording nominations of candidates to fill the King's seat, presided over a ponderous book, a pen the size of a stiletto behind each ear, and one resembling a young bayonet in his hand.

One by one the citizens of Verona shot through a small gate into the enclosure from the surging multitude outside as from a catapult; to be brought up with a round turn by the shouted question, "Pound or two pounds?" Once weighed out, the desired number of loaves

traveled rapidly from hand to hand on one side of the official line; while the applicant, struggling to keep pace with them on the other, paused before the registering clerk to answer several pertinent personal questions, corralled his purchase at the table of the receiving teller, and made his escape as best he could.

Almost before I had time to study the workings of this system, the press of humanity behind sent me spinning through the gate. "Two pounds!" I shouted, as I swept by the scales en route for the book. Just in front of me a gaunt creature paused and gave his residence as Florence. "No bread for you!" roared every officer within hearing; policemen, sergeants, and clerks, in a rousing chorus, "Only bread for Veronese! Get out of here!" and, impelled by two official boots, the stranger stood not on the order of his going.

That Florentine was a god-send to me. In my innocence I had already opened my mouth to shout "Americano" to his Self-Complacency behind the volume, and, had that fateful word escaped me, I should have gone "paneless" through the long hours of a long day.

"Residenza?" shouted the registrar, as I entered his field of vision.

"Verona, signore."

"Professione?"

"Calzolaio, signore."

"Street and number."

I remembered the name of one street and tacked on a number haphazard.

"Bene! Va!" An official hand pushed me unceremoniously towards the teller. I dropped ten soldi, gathered up my bread, and departed by the further wicket-gate down a flagstone alley.

Let him who has not tried it take my word that to carry two pounds of edible baseballs in his arms is no simple task. A loaf rolled in the gutter before I had advanced a dozen paces. The others squirmed waywardly in my grasp. With both hands amply occupied, I was reduced to the indignity of squatting on the pavement to fill my pockets, and even then a witless observer would have taken me for an itinerant juggler. Never since leaving Detroit had I posed as a philanthropist, but the burden of bread called for drastic measures; I must either be charitable or wasteful.

He who longs to give alms in Italy has not far to look for a recipient of his benefaction. I glanced down the passageway, and my

eyes fell on a beggar of forlornly mournful aspect crouched in a gloomy doorway. With a benignant smile I bestowed upon him enough of my load with which to play the American national game among his confrères until the season closed. The outcast wore a sign marked, "Deaf and dumb." Either he had picked up the wrong placard in sallying forth, or had been startled out of his rôle by the munificence of the gift. For as long as a screeching voice could reach me I was deluged with more blessings, to be delivered by the Virgin Mary; Her Son; every pope, past, present, or to come; or any saint, dead, living, or unborn, who had a few stray ones about him; than I could possibly have found use for.

I plodded on towards Vincenza. All that day the hard-earned loaves, which I dissolved in a glass of wine at village inns, aroused the envy of pessimistic groups gathered to curse the strike in general and that of the bakers in particular.

When morning broke again I summoned courage to test the third-class accommodations of Italy, and took train from Vincenza to Padua. At least, the ticket I purchased bore those two names, though the company hardly lived up to the printed contract thereon. We started from somewhere off in the woods to the west of Vincenza and, at the end of several hours of jolting and bumping, not excused, certainly, by the speed of the train, were set down in the center of a wheat field, which the guards informed us, in blatant voices, was Padua. I had a faint recollection of having heard somewhere that Padua boasted buildings and streets, like other cities. It was possible, of course, that the source of my information had been untrustworthy; I am nothing if not gullible. But fixed impressions are not easily effaced, and I wandered out through the sequestered station to whisper my absurd delusion to the first passerby.

"Padova!" he snorted, "Ma! Di siguro! Certainly this is Padua! Follow this road for a kilometer. Just before you come in sight of a whitewashed pig-sty turn to the left, walk sempre dritt', and the city cannot escape you."

I set out with the inner sense of having been "done" by the railway company, but the good man's directions proved accurate and brought me in due time to the city gate.

The Italian stammers two excuses for this enchanting custom of banishing his stations to the surrounding meadows. If the city admitted railways within her walls — and every town larger than a community of goat-herds *is* walled — how could the officials of the

octroi collect the duty on a cabbage hidden in the fireman's tool-box? Or in case of foreign invasion! A regiment of Austrians ensconced under the benches of the third-class coach might, if they survived the journey, butcher the entire population before their presence was suspected. Besides, who could live in peace and contentment knowing that the sacred intermural precincts might at any moment be deluged with a train-load of cackling, beBaedekered tour — But no, now I think of it, my informant offered only *two* apologies.

Those who are victims of insomnia should journey to Padua. There may be in the length and breadth of Europe another community as conducive to sleep, but it has thus far escaped discovery. The sun is undoubtedly hot in Italy during the summer months. There runs a proverb in the peninsula to the effect that only fools and the English — which of course, includes Americans — venture forth near noonday without at least the protection of a parasol. But having suffered no evil effects during weeks of tramping in the country with only a cap on my head, I, for one, should hesitate to charge entirely to climatic conditions the torpor of the Padovans.

At any rate the city was lost in slumber. The few horses dragged their vehicles at a snail's pace; the drivers nodded on their seats; those few shopkeepers who had not put up their shutters and retired to the bosom of their families could with difficulty be aroused from their siestas to minister to the wants of yawning customers. The very dogs slept in the gutters or under the chairs of their torpescent masters, and, to judge from many a building that was crumbling away and falling asleep like the inhabitants, this Morpheusatic tendency was no temporary characteristic.

However, the general somnolence permitted me to view in peace the statues and architecture for which the drowsy city is justly renowned, and leaving it to slumber on, I set off at noonday on the last stage of my journey across northern Italy. The phantom range of the Alps had disappeared. Away to the eastward stretched a land as flat and unbroken as the sea which, tossing its drifting sands on a lee shore through the ages, has drawn this coast further and further towards the rising sun. Walking had been easier on the long mountain ascents behind, for a powerful wind from off the Adriatic pressed me back like an unseen hand at my breast. Certain as I had been of reaching Fusiano on the coast before the day was done, twilight found me still plodding on across a barren lowland.

With the first twinkling star a faint glow appeared to the left and afar off, giving center to the surrounding darkness. Steadily it grew until it illuminated a distant corner of the firmament, while the wind howled with ever-increasing force across the unpeopled waste.

Night had long since settled down when the lapping of waves announced that I had overtaken the retreating coast-line. A few ramshackle hovels rose up out of the darkness, but still far out over the sea hovered the glow in the sky — no distant conflagration, as I had supposed, but the reflected lights of Venice. Long cherished visions of a cheering meal and a soft couch, before my entrance into the city of the sea, vanished; for there was no inn among the hovels of Fusiano. I took shelter in a shanty down on the beach and awaited patiently the ten-o'clock boat.

By the appointed hour there had gathered enough of a swarthy crowd to fill the tiny steamer that made fast with great difficulty to the crazy wharf. On the open sea the wind was riotous, and our passage took on the aspect of a trans-atlantic trip in miniature. Now and then a wave spat in the faces of the passengers huddled aft. A ship's officer jammed his way among us to collect the six-cent tickets. Behind him the officials of the Venice octroi were busily engaged in levying dues on produce from the country. Two poor devils, gaunt as death's heads, crouched in the waist, guarding between them a bundle of vegetables that could be bought a few centessimi cheaper on the mainland than in the city. The stuff could not have satisfied the normal appetite of one man; yet in spite of their pleadings, the pair were compelled to drop their share of soldi into the official bag.

By and by the toss of the steamer abated somewhat. I pushed to the rail to peer out into the night. Off the port bow appeared a stretch of smooth water in which were reflected the myriad lights of smaller craft and the illuminated windows of a block of houses rising sheer out of the sea. We swung to port. A gondola, weirdly lighted up by torches on bow and poop, glided across our bow. The houses born of the sea took on individuality, a wide canal opened on our left and curved away between other buildings, the splendor of their façades faintly suggested in the light of mooring-post lamp and lantern. It was the Grand Canal. The steamer nosed its way through a fleet of empty gondolas, tied up at a landing stage before

a marble column bearing the lion of St. Mark, and the passengers hurried away across the cathedral square to be swallowed up in the night.

In a city of streets and avenues there are certain signs which point the way to the ragged section, but among the winding waterways and arcade bridges of this strange metropolis such indications were lacking. A full two hours I tramped at utter random, on the blisters of the highway from Padua, only to turn up at last in an albergo within a stone's throw of my landing-place and the Palace of the Doges.

The squares and alleys of Venice are strewn with human wreckage. In the rest of Italy the most penurious wretch may move from place to place in an attempt to ameliorate his condition; but on this marshy island the man unable to scrape together a few soldi for boat or car fare is a prisoner. The captives are little accustomed to sleep within doors. Lodging, obviously, must be high in a city where space is absolutely limited; but there are "joints" where food sells more cheaply than anywhere else on the continent.

On the evening following my arrival, I came upon one of these establishments which rubbed shoulders with the cathedral of St. Mark. Appetite alone certainly could not have enticed me inside, but eager to scrape acquaintance with the submerged tenth — the fraction seems small — of Venice, I crowded my way into the kennel. A lean and hungry multitude surged about the counter. At one end of it was piled a stack of plates; near them stood a box which, to all appearances, had long done service as a coal scuttle, filled to overflowing with twisted and rust-eaten forks and spoons. The room was foggy with the steam that rose from a score of giant kettles containing as many species of stew, soup, and vegetable ragoût.

Each client, conducting himself as if he had been fasting for a week past, snatched a plate from the stack; thrust a paw into the box for a weapon of attack, and dropping a few coppers of most unsanitary aspect into the dish, shoved it with a savage bellow at that one of the kettles the contents of which had taken his fancy. A fog-bound server scraped the soldi into the till, poured a ladleful of steaming slop into the outstretched trencher, and the customer fought his way into a dingy back-room.

Amid the uproar I had no time to inquire prices. I proffered six cents to a wrinkled hag presiding over a caldron of what purported to be a tripe and liver ragoût. She cried out in amazement,

A Venetian pauper on the Rialto bridge

My gondolier on the Grand Canal

handed back four cents, and filled my plate to the rim. I reached the back-room with half the mess — the rest being scooped up in the coat sleeves of the famished throng — and took my place at an already crowded table. Neither bread nor wine was to be had in the house. On a board propped up across a corner of the room were several cylinders of corn mush, three feet in diameter and half as thick. A hairless creature, stripped to the waist, cut off slabs of the cake for those who would have something to take the place of bread. The yellow dough sold at two cents a pound, yet each order was carefully weighed, and purchaser and server watched the scales jealously during the operation. As a substitute for wine there was a jar of water, that abominable, germ-infested water of Venice, from which each drank in turn.

Every type of wretch which the city shelters was represented in the emaciated gathering. Rag-pickers snarled at cathedral beggars. Street urchins jostled bearded bootblacks. Female outcasts rubbed elbows with those gruesome beings who pick up a few cents a day at the landing stages. My boisterous appetite dwindled away at sight of the messes around me and in the exploration of the mysteries of my own portion. All at once there burst upon me the recollection that I had seen neither a dog nor a cat during all that day in Venice, and I turned and fought my way to the door. Behind me rose a quarrel over my unfinished portion. Outside, on the square beside the fallen campanile, kind-hearted tourists were feeding wholesome grain to a flock of pigeons, above which magnificent statues looked down upon a crowd of homeless waifs huddled under the portico of the Palace of the Doges.

I turned down to the landing stage one morning resolved on the extravagance of a gondola excursion. The water cabmen of Venice are not wont to solicit men in corduroys and flannel shirt. A score of them, just recovering from a stampede on a tow-head in regulation tourist garb, greeted my arrival with the fishy eye of indifference. When I boldly announced my plan, they crowded around me to laugh in derision at the laborer seeking to play the lord. For some time they refused to take my words seriously, and even then the first skeptic to be convinced insisted on proof of my financial solvency before he proffered his services.

Along the Grand Canal passing gondoliers, without passengers to keep them decorous, flung cutting jests at my propeller.

"Eh! Amico! What 's that you 've got?"

"Ch'è un rico, colui quà, eh?"

"Sangue della Vergine, caro mio, dove hai accozzato quello?"

But once assured of his fare, the fellow lost his smirk and became all servility, pointing out the objects of interest with a mien of owl-like solemnity, and rebuking his fellow-craftsmen with an admonishing shake of the head.

Fear drove me forth from Venice before I had rested the miles from Paris out of my legs — fear that in a few days more the mosquitoes would finish their nefarious work and devour me quite. On the Sunday evening following the opening of the carnival, I fought my confetti-strewn way to the station and "booked" for Bologna. I had not yet, however, learned all the secrets of Italian railway travel. The official who snatched my ticket at the exit to the platform and the midnight express handed it back and pushed me away with a withering glare:

"No third-class on this train," he growled, "wait for the slow train at five in the morning."

How any particular one of the trains of Italy could be discriminated against by being called slow was hard to comprehend. Perhaps I misunderstood the gateman. He may have said "the more slower train." At any rate, I was left to stretch out on a truck and await the laggard dawn.

Under a declining sun our funereal caravan crawled into Bologna, and I struck out along the ancient highway to Florence. Between the two cities stretches an almost unbroken series of mountain ranges, a poverty-stricken territory given over to grazing and wine-production, and little known to tourists, for the railway sweeps in a great half-circle around the northern end of the barrier. A few miles from the university town the highway began a winding ascent in Simplon-like solitude, save where a vineyard clung to a wrinkled hillside. At such spots tall, cone-shaped buckets of some two bushels' capacity stood at the roadside, some filled with grapes, others with the floating pulp left by the crushers.

What species of crusher was used I did not learn until nearly nightfall. Then, suddenly rounding a jutting boulder, I stepped into a group of four women, their skirts tied tightly around their loins, slowly treading up and down in as many buckets of grapes. One of them, a young woman by no means unattractive, sprang out of the bucket with a startled gasp, let fall her skirts over legs purple with grape-juice far above the knees, and fled to the vineyard. Her com-

panions, too young or too old to find immodesty in the situation, gazed in astonishment at the fleeing girl and continued to stamp slowly up and down.

Darkness overtook me in the solitude of an upper range, far from either hut or hamlet. A half hour later, a mountain storm burst upon me.

An interminable period I had plunged on when my eyes were gradually drawn to a faint light flickering through the downpour. I splashed forward and banged on a door beside an illuminated window. The portal was quickly opened from within, and I fell into a tiny wine-shop occupied by three tipplers. They stared stupidly for some time, while the water ran away from me in rivulets along the floor. Then the landlord remarked with a silly grin:—

"Lei è tutto bagnato?" (You are all wet.)

"Likewise hungry," I answered. "What's to eat?"

"Da mangiare! Ma! Not a thing in the house."

"The nearest inn?"

"Six miles on."

"Suppose I must go to bed supperless, then," I sighed, drawing my water-soaked bundle from beneath my coat.

"Bed!" cried the landlord, "you cannot sleep here. I keep no lodging house."

"What!" I protested, "do you think I am going on in this deluge?"

"I keep no lodging house," repeated the host, doggedly.

I sat down on a bench, convinced that no three Italians should evict me without a struggle. One by one they came forward to try the efficacy of wheedling, growling, and loud-voiced bluster. I clung stolidly to my place. The landlord was on the verge of tears when one of the countrymen drew me to the window and offered me lodging in his barn across the way. I made out through the storm the dim outline of a building, and catching up my bundle, dashed with the native across the road and into a stone building, with no other floor, as I could feel under my feet, than Mother Earth. An American cow would balk at the door of the house of a mountain peasant of Italy; she would have fled bellowing at a glimpse of the interior of the barn that loomed up as my host lighted a lantern, and pointed out to me a heap of corn-husks in a corner behind the oxen and asses. Fearful of losing a moment with his cronies over the wine, he gave the lantern a shake that extinguished it and, leaving me in utter darkness, hurried away.

I groped my way towards the heap, narrowly escaped knocking down the last ass in the row, and was about to throw myself down on the husks when a man's voice at my very feet shouted a word that I did not catch. Being in Italy I answered in Italian:

"Che avete? Voglio dormire qui."

"Ach!" groaned the voice. "Nur ein verdammter Italiener!"

"Here friend!" I protested, in German, prodding the prostrate form with a foot, "who are you calling verdammter?"

Before the last word had passed my lips the man in the husks sprang to his feet with a wild shout.

"Lieber Gott!" he shrieked, clutching at my coat and dancing around me. "Lieber Gott! Du verstehst Deutsch! You are no cursed Italian! Gott sei dank! In three weeks I have heard no German."

Even the asses were protesting before he ceased his shouting and settled down to tell his troubles. He was but another of those familiar figures, a German on his Wanderjahr, who, straying far south in the peninsula, and losing his last copper, was struggling northward again as rapidly as strength gained by a crust of bread or a few wayside berries each day permitted. One needed only to touch him to know that he was thin as a side-show skeleton. I offered him the half of a cheese I carried in a pocket, and he snatched it with the ravenous cry of a wolf and devoured it as we burrowed deep into the husks.

All night long the water dripped from my elbows and oozed out of my shoes, and a bitter mountain wind swept through the unmortared building. Morning came after little sleep, and I rose with joints so stiff that a half hour of kneading barely put them in working order. Outside a cold drizzle was falling, but the peasant grew surly, and, bidding farewell to my companion of the night, I set out along the mountain highway.

Two hours beyond the barn I came upon a miserable hamlet, paused at an even more miserable inn for a bowl of greasy water, alias soup, in which had been drowned a lump of black bread, and plodded on in the drizzle. A night and day of corn-husks had given me a rococo appearance that I only half suspected before my arrival at a mountain village late in the afternoon. It was a typical Apennine town; surrounded on all sides by splendid scenery, but itself a crowded collection of hovels where steep, narrow streets reeked with all the refuse of a common habitation of man and beast. The chief enigma of Italy

Going for the water. A village north of Rome

Italy is one of the most cruelly priest-ridden countries on the globe

is to know why ostensibly sane humans choose to house themselves in an agglomeration of stys, as near each other as they can be stacked, the outside huts jostling and crowding their neighbors, as if enviously waiting to catch them off their guard, that they may push nearer to the center of the unsavory jumble; while round about them spread great valleys and hillsides uninhabited.

Wallowing through the filth of such a hamlet, I came upon a tumble-down hostelry of oppressive squalor. About the fire-place were huddled several slatternly, down-cast mortals. I paused in the doorway, wondering to which to address myself. The rural innkeeper of Italy will never speak to a new arrival until he has been accosted by the latter. I once put the matter to the test by entering an inn at five in the afternoon and taking a seat at one of the tables. Many a side glance was cast upon me, many a low-toned discussion raged at the back of the room, but at nine in the evening I was still waiting for the first greeting.

Here, then, I stood for several moments on the threshold. At length, a misshapen female, unkempt and unsoaped to all appearances since infancy, fumbled in her apron, rose, and stumped slowly towards me holding out — a cent! I stepped back, and the charitable lady, misunderstanding my gesture of protest, returned to her seat, snarling in a cracked falsetto that beggars nowadays expected francs instead of soldi.

Disgusted at this invidious reception, I pigeon-holed my appetite and marched on. But I seemed permanently to have taken on the aspect of an eleemosynary appeal. Two miles beyond the village I passed a ragged road-repairer and a boy, breaking stone at the wayside. Hard by them was a hedge, weighed down with blackberries, to which I hastened and fell to picking my delayed dinner. The *cantoniere* stared a moment, open-mouthed; laid aside his sledge, and mumbled something to the boy. The latter left his place, wandered down the road a short distance beyond me and idled about as if awaiting someone. With a half-filled cap I set off again. The boy edged nearer as I approached and, brushing against me, thrust something under my arm and ran back to the stone-pile. In my astonishment I dropped the gift on the highway. It was a quarter-loaf of black bread left over from the ragged workman's dinner.

Late that night I reached a hamlet with a more energetic, if less charitable innkeeper; and the next afternoon found me looking down upon

the vast Florentine valley, the winding Arno a bluish silver under the declining sun. By evening I was housed in the city of Dante and Michael Angelo.

During four days in Florence I played a sort of Jekyll and Hyde rôle, living with the poorest self-supporting class, but spending hours each day in cathedral and galleries. Paupers were everywhere in evidence, fewer than in Venice, perhaps, for here they could escape. Lodgings all but the utterly penniless could afford. I paid a half-franc daily for an uncramped chamber within a hop, skip, and jump of the roasting-place of Savonarola. But those ultracheap eating houses of the canal city were lacking. Florentines on the ragged edge patronized instead a species of traveling restaurant. As night fell, there appeared at various corners, in the unwashed section of the city, men with push-carts laden with boiled tripe. Around them gathered jostling throngs whose surging ceased not for a moment until the last morsel had been sold. Each customer seemed to possess but a single soldo, which he had carefully guarded through the day in anticipation of the coming of the tripe-man. Never did the huckster make a sale without a quarrel arising over the size of the morsel; and never did the vendee retire until a second strip, about the size of a match, had been added to the original portion to make up what he claimed to be the just weight.

I spent an undue proportion of my fourth day in Florence viewing her works of art; for Sunday is the poor man's day in the museums and galleries of Europe, there being no admission charged. When the throng was driven forth from the Pitti palace in the late afternoon, I decided not to return to my lodging and wandered off along the highway to Rome. The mountain country continued, but the ranges were less lofty and more thickly populated than to the north, and when night settled down, I was within sight of a hilltop village.

It is doubtful if there is another nation on the globe whose people are such general favorites as our own citizens. The American is a popular fellow in almost every land, certainly not the least so in Italy. Through all the peninsula there hovers about one, from that — to the Italian — magic world of America, a glamor which is sure to arouse interest to the highest pitch. More than that; there is, among the lower classes, an attitude almost of deference towards the man in any way connected with the El Dorado across the sea, as if every breast harbored the vague hope that this favored of the gods might be moved to carry home on his return a pocketful of his admirers.

Longing for America, however, does not imply any great amount

of knowledge thereof. In this northern section especially, where one rarely meets a man whose remotest friend has emigrated, ignorance of the western hemisphere is astonishing.

An average village crowd, showing some evidence of education, was gathered in the hostelry of this first town beyond Florence. My arrival at first aroused small interest in the groups before fire-place and table. In ordering supper, however, I betrayed a foreign accent. Immediately there passed between the cronies of the band sundry nods and occult signs which they fondly believed were entirely incomprehensible to a newcomer, but which, in reality, said as plainly as words:—

"Now where the deuce do you suppose he comes from?"

I volunteered no information. The cronies squirmed with curiosity. Several more mysterious symbols flitted across the room, and one of the tipplers, clearing his throat, suggested in the mildest of tones:—

"Hem — ah — you are German, perhaps?"

A *tedesco* being no unusual sight in Italy, the listeners showed only a moderate interest.

"No."

The speaker rubbed his neck with a horny hand and turned an apologetic eye on his fellows.

"Hah! You are an Austrian!" charged another, with a scowl.

"No."

"Swiss?" suggested a third.

"No."

Interest picked up at once. A voyager from any but these three countries is something to attract unusual attention in wayside inns.

"Ah!" ventured a fourth member of the group, with a glance of scorn at his more obtuse companions, "You are a Frenchman?"

'No."

The geographical knowledge of the party was exhausted. There ensued a long, wrinkle-browed silence. The landlady wandered in with a pot, looked me over out of a corner of her eye, and retreated slowly. The suspense grew unendurable. A native opened his mouth twice or thrice, swallowed his breath with a gulp, and purred, meekly:

"Er — well — what country does the signore come from?"

"Sono americano."

A chorus of exclamations aroused the cat dozing under the fire-place. The hostess ran in, open-mouthed, from the back room. The landlord dropped his pipe on the floor and emitted the Italian variation of

"dew tell!" The most phlegmatic of the party abandoned their games and stories and crowded closely around me.

My advent seemed to two of the habitués to be providential. Some time before, a wager had been laid between them which, till now, there had seemed small chance of deciding. One man had wagered that the railway trains of America run high up in the air above the houses, a tenet which he sought to defend against all comers by an unprecedented amount of lusty bellowing, and one which his opponent pooh-poohed with equal vehemence. For a time I was at a loss to account for his claim that he had read the information in a newspaper. In the course of his vociferations, however, he mentioned "Nuova York," and inquired if it were not also true that its buildings were higher than the steeple of the village church, and whether the railways were not thus built to enable the people to get into such high houses; implying, evidently, his conviction that Americans never come down to earth. Only then was the source of his mental picture of an aërial railway system clear. He had read somewhere of the New York Elevated and had applied the article to the whole country.

Moreover "Nuova York" was synonomous with America to the entire party. Not a man of them knew that there were two Americas, not one had ever heard the term "United States." America represents to the Italian of the masses a country somewhere far away, how far or in what direction he has no idea, where wages are higher than in Italy. Countless times I have heard questions such as these from Italians who were not without education:—

"Is America further away than Switzerland?"

"Did you walk all the way from America?"

"Who is king of America?"

"Why! Are you a native American? I thought Americans were black!"

Once a woman added insult to injury by inquiring in all sincerity:—

"In America you worship the sun, non è vero?"

On some rare occasions a wiser native appeared, to display his erudition to the assembly. One evening I mildly suggested that the United States as a whole is as large, if not larger, than Italy. My hearers were deafening me with shouts of derision, when one of the party came to my rescue.

"Certainly, that's right!" he cried, "it *is* larger. I have a brother in Buenos Ayres and I know. America, or the Stati Uniti, as this

signore prefers to call it, has provinces just like Italy. The provinces are Brazil, Uruguay, Republica Argentina, and Nuova York."

Squelched by which crushing display of geographical erudition, the gathering maintained a profound silence for the rest of the evening; and the authority on America began a lecture on that topic, in the course of which I learned many a fact concerning my native land which I had never suspected.

One can be little surprised that the Italian fears to embark for a country so little known. I met often with people who had set out for America, gone as far as Genoa, and there abandoned the journey, *perché aveva paura.* Many, indeed, journey to the seaport, never suspecting that to reach this land of fabulous wealth they must travel on the ocean; more than one has only the vaguest notion of what an ocean is. When the endless expanse of water stretches out before them, all the combined miseries of their native land and the wheedling of the most silver-tongued steamship agent cannot induce them to trust themselves on its billows; and in dread and fear they hurry home again.

It may be said with little danger of error, too, that the average American knows very little of the Italian of this northern section. He is, quite contrary to popular notions, a very kind and obliging, even unselfish fellow, decidedly a different person from the usual immigrant to our shores. The riffraff and off-casts of their native land, that are spreading far and wide in our country, living in clans and bands wherein the moving spirit seems to be he whose record at home is most besmirched, the "dagoes" of common parlance, are no product of this northern portion of the peninsula. We have, possibly, been too quick to attribute to all Italians the characteristics of those undesirables with whom we have come in contact, more than seven-eighths of whom hail from the southern section. The Neapolitan, the Sicilian, the Sardinian, from lands where congested districts breed characters held in as much contempt by the Italian of the north as by our own citizens, have little in common with the Venetian, the Florentine, and the Sienese.

CHAPTER IV

THE BORDERS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

THERE are few stretches of roadway in Italy that wind through finer scenery than that panorama which spreads out along the highway between Florence and Siena. The pedestrian, however, finds small opportunity to contemplate the landscape, for his progress is beset with strange perils. Each peasant of this section possesses a yoke of white oxen, a bovine type indigenous to the Apennine region, the distinguishing feature of which is the length of the horns, measuring often six and even seven feet from tip to tip. Now meet two such beasts, yoked together, and it is a wide highway that leaves you room to pass. Moreover, their drivers being invariably sound asleep, the animals wander at sweet will about the right of way, tossing their heads toward the passer-by. When one considers that every twenty or twenty-five acres through this territory constitutes a farm, that every farmer has his pair of oxen, and that he does his best to lay out his work in such a manner as to give him the greatest possible amount of time on the road, leaving real labor to his wife and daughters, it is easily understood that to make one's way on foot, requires no mean amount of vigilance, nimbleness, and endurance.

Nor is that all. On every highway of Europe the wayfarer must be always on the alert for the sound of an automobile horn. Continental chauffeurs have small respect for foot-travelers, and the pedestrian who does not heed their imperative honk is quite apt to come into collision with a touring-car moving at its highest rate of speed. Now the first note of protest of an over-burdened ass bears a similarity to the toot of an automobile horn that can scarcely be accounted for under the head of coincidences. Moreover, the time ensuing between the first and second notes is quite long enough for a car to shoot around a corner, send the unobserving wanderer skyward, and disappear into the gasoline-saturated Beyond. In consequence, my journey from Florence to Siena was no pleasure stroll; for when I was not vaulting roadside hedges before oncoming oxen, I was crouching on the edge

of the highway, peering anxiously round a turn of the route until a second asinine vocable broke on my ear.

He who would obtain an exact idea of the ensemble of the city of Siena has but to dump a spoonful of sugar on a well-heaped dish of rice. Some of the grains remain at the very top of the heap, others cling tenaciously to the sides as if fearful of falling to the bottom into the dish itself. For rice, read a rocky hill; for sugar, houses; for dish, a broad, fertile valley in which space is unlimited, and the visualization of Siena is complete. Except in that small quarter on the flat summit of the hill it is one of those up-and-down towns in which streets should be fitted with ladders; where every householder is in imminent danger, each time he steps out of doors, of falling into the next block, should he inadvertently lose his grip on the façade of his dwelling. I scaled the city without being reduced to the indignity of making the ascent on hands and knees; but more than once I kept my place only by clutching at the flanking buildings.

How little the knowledge of the world among the masses of Italy has increased, since the days of Columbus, was suggested during my evening in the perennial inn at the summit of the town. Engaged in a game of "dama" (checkers) with the innkeeper's small daughter, I strove at the same time to satisfy the curiosity of the host himself and a band of strolling musicians, of whom a blind youth accompanied both game and conversation on a soft-voiced violin.

"When you go to America," asked the innkeeper, pointing out a move to my opponent, "you get clear out of sight of land, non è vero?"

I admitted that such experiences were common.

"Ah, I once thought of going to America," he cried, turning to impress upon the attentive audience his fearlessness in having dared to conceive so intrepid a venture, "until they told me that. But you would n't catch *me* on a boat that went clear out of sight of land. I don't mind a trip from Genoa to Naples, or even to Bastia, where you always have the coast alongside; but when you leave the land and jump out into the universe, steering by the stars and going — La Santissima Vergine knows where — ah, not for me! Why, suppose the captain loses his way when the stars move? You come to the edge of the world and over you go. Ugh!"

The audience shuddered in sympathy, and the blind youth drew forth from his instrument a wail such as might have risen from the victims of so dreadful a fate.

By the time a new topic had been broached the hostess wandered

in and sat down before the register in which I had written my autobiography. Her eyes fell on the figures indicating my age.

"Aha!" she cried, jabbing the number with a stubby forefinger and winking good-humoredly, "soldiering *is* hard work, to be sure. I don't blame you a bit. Officers *are* hard masters."

I had too often been accused of running away to escape military service to be at all put out by this familiar accusation.

"Many a boy I know," went on the woman, "has run away to America just before he reached his majority and the beginning of his three years in the army. How strange you Americans should fly over here to Italy for the same reason!"

"You bet *I* don't blame them," growled the innkeeper.

"But military service is not required in America," I protested.

"Eh!" cried my hearers, in chorus.

"We don't have to be soldiers in America," I repeated.

"What!" shouted the host, "you have no army?"

"Yes; but the soldiers are hired, as for any other trade."

"But who makes them go?" demanded the blind musician.

"No one. They are paid to go."

The audience puzzled for several moments over this strange arrangement. Suddenly the landlady burst out laughing.

"You think to fool us!" she cried. "How, if nobody makes them go, can there be soldiers to pay?"

"Aye! That's it!" roared the host.

"They want to go," I explained.

"Want to be soldiers!" bellowed the innkeeper. "What nonsense! Who wants to be a soldier and work three years for nothing?"

"But you don't understand. Those who want to be soldiers are paid wages."

"Ah!" cried the musician, with a sudden burst of inspiration, "when your name is drawn, you pay a man to go for you?"

"No; the government pays him. Our names are not drawn."

"How much money the king must spend, paying all the soldiers," mused my opponent.

"Ah! They are a strange people, the Americans," sighed the host, and he cast upon me a glance that seemed to say, "and liars, too, very often."

Weeks before, I had given up all hope of making clear to Italians our military system. The institution of compulsory service has been so woven into their picture of life since infancy that barely a man of them

Selling the famous long-horned cattle of Siena outside the walls

Italian peasants returning from market-day in the communal village

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has the power of imagining an existence without this omnipresent fate hanging over his head. Whatever may be the attitude of the educated Italian towards it, military service is regarded by the laboring class as a curse from which there is no escape. We are accustomed to say that nothing is sure but death and taxes. The Italian would include conscription.

Two days after leaving Siena, I turned out in the early morning from Viterbo, just fifty miles north of Rome. Strange to say, in measure as I approached the capital the less inhabited became the countryside. For hours beyond Viterbo the highway wound over low mountains between whispering forests, in utter solitude. Where the woods ended, stretched many another weary mile with never a hut by the wayside. Only an occasional shepherd, clad in sheepskins, sat among his flocks on a hillside, and gave life to a landscape that suggested the wilds of Wyoming or the vast steppes of Siberia.

The sun was touching the western horizon as I traversed a rugged village, but with Rome so close at hand I pressed on. The hamlet, however, appeared to be the last habitation of man along the highway. The sun sank in an endless morass, amid the whispering of great fields of reeds and grasses, and the dismal croaking of frogs. Twilight faded to black night. Far off, ahead, the reflection of the Eternal City lighted up the sky; yet hours of tramping seemed to bring the glow not a yard nearer.

Forty-one miles I had covered when three hovels rose up by the wayside. One was an inn, but the keeper growled out some protest and slammed the door in my face. I took refuge and broke an all-day fast in a wine-shop patronized by traveling teamsters, one of whom offered me a bed on his load of straw in the adjoining stable.

He rose at daybreak, and for the first few miles the dawdling pace of his mules was fully fast enough for my maltreated legs. Little by little I forged ahead. The deserted highway led across a bleak moorland, rounded a slight eminence, and brought me face to face with the once center of the civilized world.

To the right and left, on low hills, stood large modern buildings, from which the mass of houses sloped down and covered the intervening plains, broken only by the Tiber winding its way through the dull, grey stretch of habitations. Here and there a dome or steeple reflected the morning sun, but towering high above the mass, dwarfing all else by comparison, stood the vast dome of St. Peter's. Close before me began an unbroken suburb on both sides of the route; suggesting that

the modern Roman builds only as far from the center of the city as his view of it remains unimpaired. Countless multitudes have caught their first glimpse of Rome from this low hilltop. Before the days of railways, pilgrims journeyed from Civita Vecchia, on the coast, by this same road — millions of them on foot, and entered the city by this massive western gateway. Through the portal poured a steady stream of peasants, on wagons, carts, donkeys, and afoot, checked by officers of the octroi, who ran long lances through bales and baskets of farm produce. I joined the surging bedlam and was swept within the walls.

Early that afternoon I made my way across the Tiber and through the narrow streets of the Borgo to the square before St. Peter's. About the papal residence the carriages of le beau monde kept up continual procession. I threaded my way towards the entrance to the Vatican galleries, though with little hope that one who had been taken for a beggar in the miserable villages of the Apennines could get beyond the door. At the base of the stairway a Swiss guard, resplendent in that red and yellow uniform which Michael Angelo is accused of having perpetrated, raised his javelin and accosted me in German:—

"Sorry, Landsmann, but the galleries are just closing; it is one o'clock."

Taking the speech as a polite way of saying that tramps were not admitted, I turned away. Another glance, however, showed that visitors really were leaving, and a "hist" from behind called me back. The guard, glancing around to see if he were observed by the other servants of the Holy Father, leaned on his lance and inquired in a low voice:—

"How 's business on the road these days?"

He had, it turned out, once been a penniless wanderer in nearly every corner of the continent. For some time we chatted in the jargon of "the road," that language made up of a mixture of slang and gestures that one can learn only by tramping the highways of Europe. The guard smiled reminiscently at each mention of the rendezvous of vagrants to the north, and, having heard such bits of news from the field of action as I could give him, carefully outlined for me the various "grafts" of the Roman fraternity. A companion in office called to him from the top of the steps and he hurried away with the parting injunction:—

"Come to-morrow, mein Lieber, early, if you want to see the galleries."

When I had inspected the interior of St. Peter's I sought out the

rendezvous to which the guard had directed me. A dozen birds of passage around the wine-tables greeted my entrance in several languages:—

"Ha! En voilà un de plus!"

"Woher, Landsmann? Was gibt's neues?"

"Y que tal la carretera, hombre?"

"Madre di dio, amico, che fa caldo! Vuoi bere?"

I sipped the glass of wine offered by the Italian — to have drunk it all would have been "bad form"— and sat down to give an account of myself.

"Aber du bist kein Deutscher?" cried a grizzled vagabond, when I had finished.

"Amerikaner," I replied.

"American!" shouted the band, in a chorus in which European tongues ran riot, "Why, there is another American knocking about town. He 'll drop in before long; meanwhile, have a drink."

I waited impatiently, for months had passed since I had spoken with a fellow countryman. In the course of a half-hour there strolled in a swarthy specimen of the genus vagabundus, attired in a ragged misfit.

"Ach! Du Amerikaner!" cried the chorus. "Here is a countryman of yours."

I accosted the newcomer. "How are you, Jack?"

He took place on a bench, stared at me a moment, and demanded, in Italian:—

"What country are you from?"

"Dei Stati Uniti," I replied. "But they told me you were an American, too."

"Certainly I am an American!" he shouted, indignantly. "I come from Buenos Ayres."

It had been my custom to ramble at random through the cities of Europe, visiting the points of special interest as I chanced upon them. The topography of Rome, however, is not of the simplest, and, having picked up a guide-book for a few soldi in a second-hand stall, I set out dutifully to follow its lead through the city. It was a work in Italian, published for the use of Roman Catholic pilgrims. For two days it led me a merry chase among the churches and chapels of Rome, calling attention here to the statue of a saint, the bronze foot of which had been kissed into a shapeless mass by devout *pellegrini;* there to a shrine in which was enclosed the second bone of the third finger of the right hand of some martyr or pope, or a splinter of the true cross

that had miraculously found its way to Rome. But as I hurried from chapel to church and from church to chapel I became suspicious of the profound silence of the book's author, a Father Guiseppe Somebody, on the subject of the monuments of ancient Rome. Having therein more interest than in martyrs' bones and kissed statues, I sat down on the steps of the forty-ninth church, and turned over the leaves in search of reference to the old-time edifices. Page after page the nomenclature of churches and chapels continued, interspersed with descriptions of more finger-bones and splinters; but, up to the last leaf, not a word of ante-Christian Rome and its ruins. On the final page, in a footnote, the devout author expressed himself as follows:—

"There are in Rome, besides all the blessed relics and holy places we have pointed out to the pilgrim, certain ruins and monuments of the days previous to the coming of Our Holy Saviour. The Faithful, however, will take care not to defile themselves by visiting these remnants of unholy pagan and heathen Rome."

I sold the "Pilgrims' Guide" for the price of a bottle of wine and set out to explore the city after my own fashion.

Cæsar, for some reason, has not seen fit to inform posterity whether he patronized the "Colosseum Tonsorial Parlors," or carried his own razor. If he sallied forth for his daily scrape, times were different then; for, had the conqueror of the Gauls had at hand such barbers as modern Rome harbors he would certainly have turned Vercingetorix over to their tender mercies instead of subjecting him to the mild punishment of an underground dungeon.

There was a shop not far from the wayfarers' retreat in the Borgo. Recalling painful experiences elsewhere in the peninsula, I avoided it as long as possible, but there came a day when I must sneak inside and take a seat. That, to begin with, was a mere chair, a decidedly rickety one that squeaked and writhed under me as if afraid, like myself, of the scowling proprietor, who stropped his razor in the far corner. By and by he laid the weapon aside, and picking up a small milk-pan, retreated to the back of the room. The only mirror in the establishment being some five inches square, there was no means of knowing what game he indulged in during a prolonged absence.

I had all but fallen asleep, stretched like a suspension bridge between the chair and the wooden box that did duty as foot-rest, when the barber, approaching stealthily, slapped me suddenly and emphatically on the point of the chin with the brush of a defunct or bankrupt bill-poster. The blow was nothing compared with the temperature of the

splash of lather that accompanied it. The cold chills set the ends of my toes tingling. There ensued a lathering of which no American so fortunate as to have spent all his days in the land of his first milk-bottle can form a conception. From ear to ear, from Adam's apple well up my nostrils, that icy lather was slapped and rubbed in with the paste-brush and the rasp-like palm of the manipulator, until my first notion that this thorough soaping was to lighten the work with the razor was succeeded by the fear that my torturer had decided to dispense with that instrument entirely. When he had covered all my face but one eye, the barber laid aside his brush, strolled to the door, and stood with his arms akimbo, evidently to give his biceps time to recover from their strenuous exertions.

A fellow-townsman sauntered by, and the two fell into a discussion that involved, not the batting averages of the major league, but the advance of a half-cent a liter in the price of wine. The lye on my face began to draw and tingle, the chair groaned under me, and still the dispute raged at the door. Fortunately, the townsman was called away before it was settled. The barber gazed after his retreating form, hummed an opera air in sotto voce, and glanced at the sky for signs of a storm. Then he turned slowly around, stared frowningly at me for several moments in an effort to recall how a man all soaped and ready for the razor had gotten into his establishment, and, with a sigh of regret at the task before him, hunted up the razor, stropped it again as if it had lain unused for six months, and fell to. A hack at one side of my face razed at least a dozen hairs. The torturer changed his mind concerning the point of attack and transferred his efforts to the other side — with no gratifying success, however. He began once more, this time at the point of the chin, worked his way upward by a series of cuts and slashes, and, having removed from my face most of the skin, a fair share of the lather, and even some of the stubble, stepped back to survey his handiwork.

"Here, you 're not finished!" I cried, pointing to my upper lip.

"What! Shave your lip?"

"Certainly."

"But why?"

"Because I want it shaved."

"Santissima Madonna!" he gasped, making several passes before a chromo print of the Virgin on the back wall. "Here is a man who wants the upper lip of a woman!"

However, having called the Lady's attention to his innocence, he

shaved the lip and relieved an anxiety under which I had labored since entering the shop. For, many a barber of Italy had refused point-blank to undertake any such unprecedented defilement of the human face, and driven me forth with a nascent moustache in spite of my protests.

Nearly a week after my arrival in the capital I turned southward again, on the highway to Naples. For three days the route led through a territory packed with ragged, half-starved people, who toiled incessantly from the first peep of the sun to the last waver of twilight, and crawled away into some foul hole during the hours of darkness. The inhabitants of this famished section bore little resemblance to the people of the north. Shopkeepers snarled at their customers, the "short-change racket" was always in evidence, false coins of the smallest denomination abounded — fancy "shoving the queer" with nickels — and, had not my appearance been quite in keeping with that of the natives, I should certainly have won the attention of those who live by violence.

There were other difficulties unknown in the north. The language changed rapidly. The literary tongue, spoken in Florence and Siena, was almost foreign here. A word learned in one hamlet was incomprehensible in another a half-day distant. The villages, almost without exception, were perched at the summits of the most inaccessible hills, up which each day's walk ended with a weary climb by steep paths of rubble that rolled underfoot.

I found lodging at the wayside only on my fourth day out of Rome, in a building that was one-fourth inn and three-fourths stable. The keeper, his wife, and a litter of children had scarcely enough wardrobe between them to have completely clothed the smallest urchin. All were barefooted, their feet spread out nearly as wide as they were long, the thick callous of the soles split and cracked up the sides like the hoofs of horses that had long gone unshod. The wife and several of her brood lay on a heap of chaff in a corner of the room reserved for humans. The father sat on a stool, bouncing the *bambino* up and down on his unspeakable feet; another child squatted on the top of the four-legged board that served as table and, in awe of the new arrival, alternately handled his toes and thrust his fingers in his mouth.

"You have lodgings for travelers?" I inquired.

"Yes," growled the proprietor.

"How much for a bed?"

"Two cents."

I was skeptical and demanded to see the lodging that could be had at such a price.

"Giovanni!" bawled the head of the charming band, "bring in the bed!"

A moth-eaten youth threw open the back door and fired at my feet a dirty grain-sack, filled with crumpled straw that peeped out here and there.

When I had smoked a final pipe, the father bawled once more to his first-born and motioned to me to take up my bed and walk. I followed the youth across a stable yard towards a wing of the building, picking my way between the heaps of offal by the light of the feeble torch he carried. Giovanni waded inside, pointed out to me a long, narrow manger of slats, and fled, leaving me alone with the problem of how to repose nearly six feet of body on three feet of stuffed grain-sack. I tried every combination that ingenuity and some not entirely different experiences could suggest, but concluded at last to sleep on the bare slats and use the sack as a pillow.

I had just begun to doze, when an outer door opened and let in a great draught of night air, closely followed by a flock of sheep that quickly filled the stable to overflowing. Some of the animals attempted to overflow into the manger, sprang back when they found it already occupied, and made known their discovery to their companions by a long series of "baas." The information awakened a truly Italian curiosity. The sheep organized a procession and the whole band filed by the manger, every animal poking its nose through the slats for a sniff. This formality over, each of the flock expressed a personal opinion of my presence in trembling, nerve-racking bleats, which discussion had by no means ended, when the youth came to inform me that it was morning and carried off my bed, fearful, no doubt, of my absconding with that valuable ameublement.

In spite of the bruises on the salient points of my anatomy, I plodded on at a good pace, hoping, with this early start, to reach Naples before the day was done. Two pairs of gendarmes, who halted me for long interviews, made the attempt useless, however; and I was still in the country when the gloom, settling down like fog, drove into the highway bands of fatigued humans and four-footed beasts, toiling homeward. The route descended, the intervening fields between squalid villages grew shorter and shorter, finally giving way entirely to an un-

broken row of stone houses that shut in the highway. The bands of homing peasants increased to a stream of humanity against which I struggled to make my way.

Swept into the back-water of the human current, I cornered a workman and inquired for Naples.

"Napoli! Ma! *This* is Napoli!" he bellowed, shoving me aside.

I plunged on, certain that a descending road must lead to the harbor and its sailors' lodgings. Ragged, sullen-visaged laborers, now and then an unsoaped female, swept against me. Donkeys laden and unladen protested against the goads of their cursing masters. Heavy ox-carts, massive wagons, an occasional horseman, fought their way up the acclivity, amid a bedlam of shrill shouts, roaring oaths, the strident yee-hawing of asses, the rumble of wheels on cobble-stones, the snap of whips, the resounding whack of cudgels; and before and behind a bawling multitude filled the scene that resembled nothing more nearly than the hurried flight of its diabolical inhabitants from that inferno which the Florentine has pictured. It was long after my first inquiry for "Napoli" that I reached level streets and was dragged into a dismal hovel by a boarding-house runner. Fifty-five days had passed since my departure from Paris, thirty-four of which had been spent in walking.

If there is a spot of similar size in the civilized world that houses more rascals, knaves, and degenerates than Naples, it has successfully hidden its iniquities. The struggle for existence in this densely packed section of the peninsula has driven its lower classes in one of two directions: they have become stolid, unthinking brutes or incorrigible rogues. Even those who, by day, are employed at professions considered honorable and remunerative among us, spend their nights and idle hours as agents of every species of business and deception to be found in congested centers. Every steamship office, every restaurant, every hotel, shop, gambling den, or house of prostitution has its scores of "runners" to entice the stranger or unwary citizen within its doors. We have "runners" in America, but these procurers that fight for a meager percentage in Naples are not merely the dregs of city life; even the man who has left his telegraph instrument or bookkeeper's stool during the afternoon prowls through the dark streets in quest of a stray soldo. The barber roams at large to drag into his shop those whose faces show need of his services; the merchant stands before his door and bawls and beckons to the passing throng like a side-show barker; the ticket-agent tramps up and down the wharves striving to sell passage, at regular price if necessary; at an exorbitant one if possible.

To cheat is second nature to the Neapolitan of the masses. He cheats his playmates as a boy, cheats the shopkeeper at every opportunity, enters business as a man intending to cheat, and sticks to that intention with a persistence worthy a better cause to the end of his days — to be cheated by the undertaker and the priest at the finale of his life of deception and fraud. Yet this same Naples, corrupt, Machiavelian, is, with its environs, the breeding-ground of the vast majority of Italians who emigrate to America.

As is usual among poverty-stricken people, gambling is the principal vice of the southern Italian. Cards and dice are not unknown, but the game that is dearest to the heart of the Neapolitan is *mora,* the counting of fingers. The sharp call of " cinque ! tre ! otto ! tre ! dieci ! " raised a never-ending hubbub in my lodging house. The sums of money hazarded were not fabulous; but had there been fortunes at stake the game could not have been more fiercely contended. Each player, at the beginning of the contest, jabbed his sheath-knife into the bottom of the table within easy reach of his hand, and at every dispute waved it threateningly above his head. A quarrel, one evening, went beyond the point of vociferations. One player emerged from the contest with a slash from nose to chin, and another with an ugly cut in the abdomen. But so ordinary an occurrence was this in the house that a half-hour later the game was raging as loudly as before.

One fine morning, soon after my arrival in Naples, I awoke to find myself the possessor of just twenty francs. Thus far I had been a tourist; for, if I had spent sparingly, I had given my attention to sightseeing rather than to searching for employment. Having squandered in unriotous living the money intended for photographing, the time had come when I must earn both the living and the photographs.

It had been my intention to ship as a sailor from Naples to some point of the near east. The cosmopolitan dock loafers assured me, however, that there was but one port on the Mediterranean in which I might hope to sign on, and that was Marseilles. The information had come too late, for the fare to Marseilles as a deck passenger — and that included no food en route — was twenty-five francs. To be left stranded in Naples, however, was a fate to be dreaded. I determined to take passage as far as possible, namely, to Genoa, and to make my way as best I could from there to the great French port.

By playing rival runners against each other, I reduced the regular fare of twelve francs to nine francs and a cigar, the stogie being the commission of the runner. With a day left at my disposal I ruined

my misused shoes among the lava-beds of Vesuvius, slept on a park bench to save the price of a lodging, and was rowed out to the *Lederer Sandor,* a miserable cargo-steamer hailing from Trieste. She did not sail until a full twenty-four hours after the time set, and my stock of bread and dried codfish gave out while we were but halfway to Genoa. I had noted, however, that, the ship's business being chiefly the carrying of freight, little watch was kept on the passengers. Upon arrival in the birthplace of Columbus, therefore, I purchased a second stock of provisions and returned on board, for it was cheaper to hire a boatman to row me out to the ship than to pay lodgings in the city. Among a score of through passengers my presence on board attracted no attention and, knowing that the Sandor was to continue along the Riviera, I was still seated on one of her hatches when she sailed out of Genoa at noon.

We cast anchor next morning at St. Maurizio and, in the early afternoon, steamed on towards Nice. As we slipped by gleaming Monte Carlo, and I was beginning to congratulate myself on having made my way thus far in spite of a flat purse, the first mate, a native of Trieste, sought me out on deck.

"What is your name?" he asked, in Italian, waving in his hand a bundle of tickets, each of which bore the signature of its purchaser.

Plainly my ruse was discovered; but, hoping to confuse the discoverer, I answered in English. But to no avail. For this young man, who swore at the sailors in German and cursed longshoremen impartially in Italian and French, spoke English almost without an accent. I had barely mentioned my name when he burst out in my own tongue: —

"What are you doing on board? Your ticket is only to Genoa."

"Yes!" I stammered, "but I want to get to Marseilles and I have n't the price."

"No fault of ours, is it?" demanded the officer. "Your ticket reads Genoa. You will have to pay the price from Genoa to Nice."

"Have n't got the half of it," I protested.

The mate stared at me a moment in silence and hurried away to attend to more pressing affairs. Whether he forgot my existence purposely or by accident, I know not; he was busy on the bridge until our arrival at Nice and, by dropping over the bow to the wharf as dusk fell, I dodged the vigilant eyes of both ship and custom officers and hurried away, once more in "la belle France."

I rose next morning with a one-franc piece in silver and a five-franc note, both in Italian currency. The silver passed as readily as a French

Italian peasants returning from the vineyards to the village

A factory of red roof-tiles near Naples. The girl works from daylight to dark for sixteen cents

coin and, fancying the paper would be as eagerly accepted, I did not trouble to change it into coin of the republic before setting out on the hundred and fifty mile tramp to Marseilles. The last sou of the silver piece had been spent when I arrived at Cannes in the evening. I turned in at an auberge of the famous spa and tendered the Italian note in payment for a lodging.

"Non d'un chien! We don't take Italian paper!" cried the aubergiste, with great vehemence. "Ça ne vaut rien du tout."

I visited several other inns and such shops as were still open, but the note I could not pass, even at a discount. I found myself in the paradoxical situation of being penniless with money in my pocket. A chill wind blew in from the Mediterranean. I sat down on a step out of range of the village lights, but soon fell to shivering and rose to wander on. Down on the sandy beach in front of the principal street were drawn up several rowboats. I peered from behind the nearest building until the two officers who patroled the water front had reached the far end of their beats and, scurrying down to the beach, dropped into the shadow of the first skiff. Most of the boats were tightly covered with boards or tarpaulins but, creeping on hands and knees from one to another, I found two with coverings that had openings in them large enough to admit a lean and hungry mortal. In the first into which I thrust my head I made out the forms of two gamins, sound asleep. The second was uninhabited. I squirmed my way in and found inside a bed of dirty, but warm reed mats.

Scarcely had I fallen asleep when I was awakened by the chatter of hoarse voices and looked up to see an angry face peering at me through the opening.

"Eh! Dis donc, toi!" growled the possessor of the face. "Qu'est-ce que tu fais dans mon lit?"

"Ton lit," I answered, sleepily. "If I got here first, how does it come to be your bed?"

"Hein!" snarled the face. "Ç 'a été mon coucher ces trois mois. Bouge toi de là, sinon —" and he drew a finger suggestively across his throat.

At this display of emotion one of his companions outside pulled the speaker away and thrust his own face in at the opening.

"Mais, dis donc, mon vieux!" he murmured. "You don't mean to rob three poor devils of the bed they have slept in for weeks, quoi?"

I admitted the injustice of such action and crawled out to join the three crouching figures in the shadow of the craft.

"Where do you come from?" whispered one of them.

"From Nice. I am on the road."

"Quoi!" cried the three, in suppressed chorus, "on the road! Then why don't you go to the gendarmerie?" and they pointed away across the beach to a lighted window.

"They 'll give you a bed for three nights," went on one of the trio, "we 've been stowed away there as many times as the law allows or we would n't make our nests here."

I crouched out of sight until the patrol had passed once more and dashed across the sand towards the lighted window. A door stood ajar; inside, an officer, armed in a way more fitting to a chief of brigands than to the guardian of a peaceful watering-place, leaned back in his chair, puffing at a long Italian cigar.

"Bien! Qu'est-ce qu'il y a?" he demanded, laying the stogie on the table edge and surveying me leisurely from head to foot.

I waved the five-franc piece in the air. "I 'm a sailor, walking to Marseilles, and the innkeepers won't accept this."

"Ça!" he cried contemptuously, after examining the bill under the light; "Why, that 's Italian. No good at all! Why do you come to the gendarmerie so late? We can't let vagabonds into the Asile de Nuit at this hour."

"The Asile de Nuit!" I protested. "I 'm not looking for the Asile, but for an inn; and I don't see that I 'm a vagabond, with a five franc note —"

"That 's no good," he finished, "perhaps not, legally, but — Where are your papers?"

I handed over the consular letter and the cattle-boat discharge. The officer studied them a moment as if English were not unknown to him and fell into a reverie.

"American, eh?" he mused, when his dream had ended; "Sailor. Hum! Well, go sit out in the hall until I am relieved and I 'll take you to the Asile."

I sat down against the wall on the flagstone of the entry and fell into a doze from which I was awakened by the entrance of another gendarme, in full armament like his colleague. The latter stepped out a moment later, growled a "viens," and hurried off through the deserted streets, his sword rattling noisily on the pavement in the silence of the night. I marched close at his heels, wondering what was in store for me; for, though I had often heard roadsters mention the

vagabond quarters which every city of France maintains, I knew nothing of the institutions at first hand.

Five minutes' walk brought us to a small brick building, at the door of which the gendarme drew out a bunch of gigantic keys and entered. The first door led into a hallway along which the officer walked some ten feet and, with more rattling of keys, opened a second that led into nothing, so far as I could see, but Stygian darkness.

"Voilà!" he shouted, pushing me past him through the door; "Te voilà à l'Asile de Nuit."

"But where do I sleep?" I demanded. The darkness was absolute and, at my first step inside the door, I bumped against what appeared to be the edge of a heavy table.

"Hein! Diable! Sleep on the shelf," snapped the gendarme; then, comprehending that I was unfamiliar with the architectural arrangements of an Asile de Nuit, he struck a match and by its brief flicker I caught a glimpse of the night asylum of Cannes.

It was a room about twenty feet long and seven wide, with a single, strong-barred window at the end facing the street. The entire length of the room ran a sloping wooden shelf, six feet wide and some four feet above the floor at the highest edge, with an alleyway a foot wide between it and the wall behind me. The ledge was occupied by about fifteen as sorry specimens of humanity as it had as yet been my lot to see in one collection. They were packed like spoons, with nothing between their bodies and the twenty-foot bed but their own rags; and each of the fifteen braced his feet against a board projecting some four inches above the lower end of the shelf as if his life depended on keeping in that position.

As the wavering light of the match fell on their faces, a chorus of surly growls burst from the lips of the speakers, and increased to shouts and curses when the gendarme crowded a knee between two of the prostrate forms and exerted his strength to push more closely together the two divisions of the company thus formed.

"Sacré bleu, vous!" he bellowed. "Bougez vous, donc! Here 's a comrade. Do you want all the Asile to yourselves, non de Dieu!" "Crowd in there," he commanded, pushing me towards the six-inch space which he had opened between two of the sleepers. I crowded in, as per order, but did not succeed in widening the space to any appreciable extent. The gendarme went out, slammed and locked both doors, and left me to listen to the growls and oaths that by no means

decreased at his exit. The planks, for all I know, may have been soft enough; with all my struggling I could not force the slumberers far enough apart to reach the shelf; and I spent the night lying with one shoulder and one hip on each of my nearest companions, who alternated in turning over and pushing me back and forth between them like a piece of storm-tossed wreckage on the open sea.

The king of theatrical costumers, striving to dress unconventionally the beggar chorus of a comic opera, could have created nothing to equal the garments of the gathering of tramps from the four corners of Europe that slid off the shelf with the advent of daylight, and fell to brushing and rearranging their rags as if some improvement in appearance could result from such industry. Instinct is so strong in man that, were his only covering a fig-leaf, he would doubtless give it a shake and a pull upon arising, if only in memory of days when his attire was less abbreviated. I rubbed my eyes and waited for some of my companions to make the first move towards the door. But their toilet finished, they sat down one by one on the edge of the shelf as if the desire to get outside the building was the furthest from their thoughts, and fell to exchanging their troubles in at least four languages.

I rose and, climbing over a forest of legs to the door, grasped the knob and was about to give it a yank, when the exit of the officer the night before, with the clang of heavy bolts shot home, came back to memory. I sat down again with the others, and following their example, filled my pipe, as the only consolation left me. Nor was one of these outcasts, who told of days of fasting and the bitter pangs of hunger, without his supply of the soothing weed.

Traffic was already beginning in the street outside. Now and then some facetious passer-by stopped to peer through the bars at us and to sneer: "Bah! Messieurs les vagabonds. Sales bêtes!" Others carried their jocosity so far as to toss pebbles and clods of earth in through the grating; to which treatment my companions in misery were powerless to reply, except by spitting out viciously at their tormentors and promising them a summary vengeance when once they were released.

An hour after daylight a gendarme came to unlock the doors. I pushed out with the rest and set off in the direction of Marseilles. I had not gone five paces, however, when I heard a shout behind me:

"Eh, toi! Où est-ce que tu vas comme ça?"

I turned around in surprise.

"Come along here, you," roared the officer, and with the rest I filed back to the gendarmerie, the butt of the derisive grimaces of passing urchins.

At headquarters each of us was registered again, as we had been the night before, after which we were permitted to go our several ways. There was no means of changing my wealth into French coin until the banks opened, two hours later. Scorning to delay so long, I turned away breakfastless to the westward, convinced that some village banker would come to my assistance by the time France was wide awake. But at high noon I was still plodding on, dizzy with hunger and the fatigue of climbing a low, uninhabited spur of the Alps that stretches down to the Mediterranean west of Cannes, with that infernal Italian note still in my pocket. At four in the afternoon I reached the village of Fréjus. A merchant, whom I ran to earth after a long search, agreed to accept the likeness of Vittore Emanuele at a half-franc discount; and I sat down on the village green with an armful of bread and dried herring — my first meal in twenty-eight hours.

I paid, that night, for a flee-bitten lodging in Le Puget, but concluded next day that the three francs remaining could be better invested in food than in sleeping-quarters. When darkness again overtook me, therefore, I applied for accommodations at the gendarmerie of Cuers. The village was too small to boast an Asile de Nuit, but after long argument I induced the rustic in charge of the town hall to allow me to occupy the solitary cell which the hamlet reserved for the incarceration of its felons. It was a three-cornered hole under the stairway leading to the upper story, and I spent the night in durance vile; for the rustic, for some reason unknown, insisted on locking me in.

Next day I pressed steadily onward through a hungry Sunday of pouring rain, the mud of the highway oozing in through the expanding holes of my dilapidated shoes. From time to time a facetious innkeeper peered out through the down-pour to shout: "Hé donc, toi! You don't know it's raining, perhaps?" But bent on reaching Marseilles before my last coppers had been scattered, I dared not linger to give answer.

Late Sunday evening is an inconvenient hour to look for the municipal officers of an unimportant French village. Back of the central *place* of Le Beausset I found the hôtel de ville, a decrepit, one-story building; but I knocked at the back door, the entrée des vaga-

bonds, for some time in vain. A passing villager advised me to "go right in." I opened the door accordingly and stepped inside, only to be driven out again by a series of feminine shrieks before I had an opportunity to make out, in a badly-lighted kitchen, the exact source of the uproar. I sat down in the rain outside the door that had been slammed and bolted behind me and waited.

When the last café had ceased its shouting, another villager, half in uniform, pushed past me and knocked for admittance. Certain that he was a gendarme, I followed him inside. At the back of the room, over a stove from which rose tantalizing odors, stood two women who, catching sight of me, deluged the officer with a flood of words.

"Here, mon vieux," he snapped, whirling upon me, "what do you mean by marching into my house and frightening my women out of their wits?"

I excused my conduct on the ground of advice too hastily taken. The gendarme scowled over my papers, tucked them away in a greasy cupboard behind the stove, and turned with me out into the night. The Asile was not far distant, and it was unoccupied. The officer set a candle-end on a beam and, bidding me not to set the place on fire and to exchange the key for my papers in the morning, departed. I burrowed deep into the straw with which the shelf was covered and fell to sleep in my water-soaked garments.

Short rations and plank beds had left me in no condition to cover in a single day the thirty-five miles between Le Beausset and Marseilles. I found my legs giving way when darkness caught me some distance from the harbor and, having no hope of finding a better lodging, sat down against a tree on an outer boulevard. A bitter wind blew, for it was the last day of October and well north of Naples. In the far west of my own country, however, I had learned a trick of great value "on the road." It is, that a coat thrown over the head is far more protection while sleeping out of doors than when worn in the usual manner. I was, therefore, unmolested as long as the night lasted, no doubt because passers-by saw in my huddled form only a grain-sack dropped by the wayside.

CHAPTER V

A "BEACHCOMBER" IN MARSEILLES

IT was well for my immediate peace of mind that no prophet accosted me on my way down to the harbor next morning, to foretell the hungry days that were to be my portion in Marseilles. One of the strikes that periodically tie up the seaport of southern France was at its height. Dozens of sailing vessels rode at anchor in the little "Old Harbor"; the *râde* behind the great V-shaped breakwater was crowded with shipping; at the wharves were moored long rows of ocean-liners, among which the white, clipper-built steamers of the Méssagéries Maritimes predominated, their cargoes rotting in their holds. In a season of customary activity it would have been easy to "sign on" some ship eastward bound. On this November morning, a blind man must have known, from the silence of the port, that there was small prospect even of finding work ashore.

Six sous rattled in my pocket. I squandered the half of them for a breakfast and set out on a tour of the warehouses on the wharves. But at every spot where twenty longshoremen were needed for the unloading of a mail steamer, there were hundreds surging around the timekeeper, clamoring for employment. I reached the front ranks of several of these groups by football tactics, only to be informed, when I shouted my name to the official on the top of a cask or bale, that he was hiring only those stevedores whom he knew personally, and could not find places for a fourth of them. As darkness came on, I gave over the useless tramping up and down the roadstead, wolfed a "stevedore's hand-out" in one of the open-air booths of the Place de la Joliette, and utterly penniless at last, turned away to the Asile de Nuit, as the only refuge left me.

The night asylum of Marseilles, situated beyond the Avenue de la République, just off the silent wharves, was no such one-room hovel as housed the wanderer in Cannes or Cueṛs. It covered what would have been a block in an American city and rose to a height of three stories; a plain, cold structure above the door of which the legend, "Asile de Nuit," cut in stone, seemed to suggest how permanent and

irremediable is poverty. Before the entrance were at least a hundred men of every age, from mere boys to wrinkled greybeards, chattering in groups, leaning against the building, seated on the sidewalk with their feet in the gutter, or strolling anxiously up and down. Not all of them were vagabonds in outward appearance. Here and there were men in comparatively clean linen and otherwise as faultless in attire as well-to-do merchants. A half-dozen of them wore dress-suits. *They* did not sit with their feet in the gutter; most of them held aloof from their ragged companions and strutted back and forth with the pompous air of successful politicians. But their conversation was, like that of the others, of the "grafts" of the road throughout the continent of Europe.

The "dress-suit vagabond" was a type new to me then. He became a familiar figure long before my wanderings ended. Wherever I met him, he hailed from the Kaiser's realm. The German is admitted by vagabonds of every nationality to be the most successful beggar in the profession." It is this well-dressed tramp who awakens the blait sympathy of English and American tourists — those infallible dges of human nature — the world over. "Poor fellow!" will cry ne hysterical lady abroad, when approached by one of this suave-mannered gentry; "He is, indeed, making a struggle to keep up in the world! Let 's give him something worth while, Arthur, for, surely, he cannot be ranked with those lazy, ragged tramps over there." As a matter of fact, "those ragged tramps over there" are, more often than not, unpresumptuous sailors reduced to tatters by the rascalities of shipping companies or their able assistants, the land sharks of great ports. They would jump at any chance of employment, while the "poor fellow," who has begged the very clothes that give him this false appearance of respectability, has been approaching just such hysterical ladies for years, fully intends doing so to the end of his days, and would not accept the presidency of a railroad.

The Asile of Marseilles was not controlled, as those of other French cities, by the gendarmerie, but was the branch establishment of a neighboring monastery. By eight o'clock the crowd before the building had doubled, the doors were thrown open, and we filed into an office where three monks, in cowl and *soutane,* sat behind a wicket. In Europe, man's fate often hangs on a few scraps of paper. The applicant for lodging in the Asile was irrevocably turned out into the night unless he could show two of these all-important documents, one to establish his identity and nationality, and another to

prove that he had been at work at a not-too-distant date. To forge certificates of employment is no unsurmountable task to those who cannot come by them honestly, and the most laudatory ones presented were those of the "dress-suit tramps." A grey-haired frère read my papers rapidly and asked me, in English, with hardly a trace of foreign accent, if I spoke French. Upon my affirmative reply he pushed the documents I had handed him to his younger colleague, who entered my name and biography in a huge book and gave me, with my papers, a check entitling me to a bed in the Asile for eight nights.

I passed into the common room, a sort of chapel, the long benches of which were already half-filled with grumbling tramps. In front was a plain pulpit, around the walls fifteen large crucifixes, and at the back a table where several men were writing letters with materials furnished by the establishment. The room was crowded when nine o'clock sounded from the great Asile bell. The outer door closed with a bang, the grey-haired monk marched in with a gigantic Bible in his arms, mounted the pulpit, and launched forth in a service worthy of note for the length of its prayers and a drowsy discourse on the life of some saint or other, to which the assembled vagabonds listened with stolid tolerance as something which must be endured as a punishment for being penniless. A gong rang out in the hall at the end of the sermon. We mounted the stairs and each, according to his check, entered one of several large rooms containing fifty beds apiece. Those who had registered at some previous date went at once to their cots. The newcomers filed by a frère in charge of a huge pile of bedding in the center of the room. As each one received two clean sheets and a pillow-case, he promptly sought out the cot assigned him, pulled off the soiled linen, carried it back to the monk, and returned to make up his bed. The cleanliness of the cots was truly monasterial. But they were so narrow that to turn over was a precarious operation, and so much harder than a plank bed as to suggest that they were filled with ground stone. In spite, however, of the chorus of snores which mocked the printed notices on the walls, commanding silence, I lay not long awake, for I had long since parted company with soft beds.

At five in the morning, long before daylight, we were awakened by a clanging bell and a trio of frères who marched up and down the room, shouting to us to be up and away. Woe betide the man who turned over for another nap, for one of the monks was upon him in an instant and, with an agility and a force that suggested that he

had been a champion wrestler before taking orders, dumped him unceremoniously on the floor. When we had made up our beds and soused our faces at a hydrant in the outer courtyard, we were driven out into the dreary streets.

I had fallen in with a stranded English sailor at the Asile. Not even on shipboard can one strike up acquaintances as quickly as in a band of sans-sous. For an hour we wandered about the city, shivering in the chill that precedes the dawn, and then made our way down to the harbor. A British merchantman was discharging a cargo at one of the wharves. We slunk on board and, keeping out of sight of the officers, dodged into the forecastle. The crew was struggling to do away with a plentiful breakfast.

"I sye, shipmites," cried my companion, "any show for a bite?"

"Sure, lads!" shouted several of the sailors, with that hearty unselfishness of the English seamen the world over. "Eat up and give the old ship a good name!"

"English? Eh, lad?" asked the old tar who gave me his seat at the table.

"My mate is, but I 'm an American," I answered, a bit dubiously.

"Oh, hell," rumbled the veteran salt, heaping his plate in front of me, "English *or* American! What 's the bloody difference? I mean you 're not a dago or a Dutchman? How long have you been on the beach?"

We did full justice to the ship's good name and left her with bread and meat enough in our pockets to stave off the hunger engendered by a day of tramping up and down the wharves. Next morning the only English vessel in harbor lay well out in mid-stream, and we subsisted on unroasted peanuts and broken cocoanut-meat imported for its oil, of which several vessels from the Orient were discharging whole shiploads.

Penniless sailors swarmed in the Place de la Joliette and the Place Victor Gélu, the rendezvous of seamen in Marseilles. As my acquaintance with these "beachcombers" increased, I picked up knowledge of the "grafts" of the port. On my fourth morning in the city I was aroused from a nap against the pedestal of the bronze Gélu by a Brazilian sailor, who had been long stranded in the city.

"Hóla! Yank," he shouted, "are you coming for breakfas'?"

"Busted!" I answered, shortly.

"Coño, me too," he returned; "come along."

He led the way round the *vieux port* and far out along the beach

by a steep road. In that section of Marseilles known as *les catalans,* once the home of Dumas' Monte Cristo, we joined a crowd before a granite building above the entrance of which was a sign reading, "Bouchée de Pain." When the door opened we filed through an anteroom where a man handed each of us a wedge of bread, *de deuxieme qualité,* from several bushel baskets of similar wedges, and we passed silently on into an adjoining room. The two rough tables it contained were each garnished with a jar of water, which, as we ate our bread, passed from hand to hand. On the walls hung copies of the rules governing the Bouchée de Pain, and in various parts of the room stood officials who strove to enforce them to the letter. The important ones were as follows:

"1. No talking is allowed in the Bouchée de Pain.

"2. The bread must be eaten at the tables and not carried away.

"3. Anyone bringing other food into the Bouchée de Pain to eat with his bread will be summarily ejected.

"4. Bread will be served daily at ten and at three to those who do not forfeit their right to the kind charity of the city of Marseilles by disobeying these rules."

But, as he who has come into contact with tramps and adventurers knows, it is difficult to suppress the inventive talents of the genus vagabundus by mere printed statutes, even with a cohort of officers to enforce them. The second of the rules, especially, was not strictly adhered to. The crowds that reported daily at the institution were so great as to fill the tables a third and even a fourth time. The wily ones about me, knowing that this was only the "first table," nibbled their wedges ever so slowly, until the uninitiated had finished their portions and the officers cried "allez," when they tucked what was left under their coats, and tumbled with the rest of us through a back door, there to trade the wedge for tobacco, or to eat it with what they had picked up about the city.

"Vámonos, hombre," said the Brazilian; "now for the soup."

A full two miles we walked over another steep hill to find, before a building styled "Cuillère de Soupe," much the same crowd as had been at the Bouchée de Pain. The soup was more carefully doled out than the bread had been. An officer at the door called for our papers, set down our names in his register, and handed us tickets which entitled us to soup at eleven and four daily, but only for eight days.

The fates preserve me from ever again tasting the concoction, misnamed soup, which was set before me when I had gained admittance. A bowl of water, grey in color, and of the temperature which the doctor calls for when he has by him neither a stomach-pump nor a feather with which to tickle the patient's throat, contained one leaf — and that the very outside one — of a cabbage, half an inch of the top of a carrot with the leaves still on it, and three sprigs of what looked like grass. When I had made a complete inventory of my own dish, I turned to peer into that of the Brazilian. He had the self-same portion of a carrot, a companion to my cabbage-leaf, and three quite similar blades of grass. Certainly, one could not accuse the soup officials of partiality, and if the cook was sparing of specimens from the vegetable kingdom he made up for it in ingredients from the world of minerals. There was salt enough in my mess to have preserved a side of beef, and pebbles of various sizes and shapes chased each other merrily around behind the spoon with which I stirred up the mixture. I know not who supplied the establishment with water, but the beach was not far distant.

Several times I returned to the Bouchée de Pain before I left Marseilles behind; the Cuillère de Soupe I struck off my calling list at once.

The city of Marseilles has established these two institutions in an attempt to reduce the begging class, and to provide an alternative for the indiscriminate asking of alms, which is strictly forbidden in the city. The buildings have purposely been placed in the most inconvenient sections of the municipality and far apart, in the hope that only those who are in dire want will visit them. As small an amount of food is given as will sustain life, because it is fancied that this arrangement will cause the penniless to redouble their efforts to become self-supporting. Yet the plan is not entirely a success, though the authorities may not know it. Many a man I have seen at these places whom I knew had money enough on his person to buy a dozen hotel dinners — money wheedled out of soft-hearted and soft-headed tourists, which he would have considered it a sin to pay out for food when cool, green absinthe could be bought with it. The "dress-suit tramps," if they had no "bigger game on the string," made this walk their daily exercise, and referred to it as their "constitutional." Those who wished really to look for work found that the long tramp twice a day used up both their time and their strength, until they had little of either left to prosecute their search.

The strike broke and business was slowly and half-heartedly resumed. All my efforts to find work, however, turned to naught. It became evident that if ever I "shipped" for the Orient it must be through the assistance of someone of better standing. A few of the "beachcombers" signed on, but every captain who wandered through the Place Victor Gélu to pick up a sailor was at once surrounded by a half-hundred seamen headed by their "boarding masters," and chose his man long before an "outsider" could gain a hearing. In many a city of Europe I had been advised by fellow-wayfarers to appeal to the American consul. In the opinion of my English companion and others: "That 's all the bloody loafers are shipped over here for, anyway, to give we honest chaps a lift when we 're down." Not quite sharing this view, I had, thus far, thanked the advisers and gone my way. But when I had seen several "beachcombers" sail away through the assistance of higher authorities, I determined to make my existence known to our Marseilles representative.

Accordingly, on my return from the Bouchée de Pain one morning, I stopped in at the consulate. My papers were inspected by a negro secretary in the outer office, passed on to the vice-consul, and finally to the consul-general. That official, calling me inside to satisfy himself as to my nationality, gave me a note to one "Portuguese Joe," whom I would find "hanging around on the Place Victor Gélu." Joe, the consul explained, was master of a sailors' boarding house, who undertook to shelter and feed such penniless mariners as the consul could vouch for, until he found them berths, and took his reward in a month's advance on their wages — the regular blood-money system that is in vogue in almost every port.

I found Joe "hanging around" as the consul had promised, hanging around a lamp-post in the center of the *place,* and if he had not been able to find some such support he would have been lying around the same public spot. He was a big, greasy, half-breed nigger — I should hate to say negro — and he had what, in Jack Tar's parlance, is known as "a full cargo." In a ring about him were a score of sailors of various nationalities and colors, from plain New Yorkers and Baltimore negroes, to East Indians and men from the Congo Free State, who were making the boarding master the butt of their raillery. These same men, except, perhaps, the Anglo-Saxons, would have quailed before this maudlin rascal, sober, whom they were repaying, now, by their ridicule, for many a perfidious trick he had played them.

I received a franc from the drunken lout as soon as I had made him

understand the note from the consul, and lost no time in leaving it in a restaurant. That night I slept on the floor of Joe's house, with a huge Antigua negro as a roommate. The house was a shack bordering on the fish-market and the red-light district, a quarter requiring six policemen to the block. Several times during the night I started up at some piercing scream or long-drawn wail, and I borrowed a morning paper fully expecting to read of deeds of unusual violence. But it was only the customary list of minor misfortunes that was chronicled; a carousing sailor run down in that street, an Italian stabbed by a fellow-countryman in this, a demi-mondaine thrown out of a window in a third.

Portuguese Joe was a totally different being the next morning from the besotted wretch that I had seen the day before. Fat and pompous, dressed as if to attend a fancy ball, he paraded up and down the seamens' rendezvous, interviewing a captain here, stopping for a tête-à-tête with another boarding master or a runner there, and scowling haughtily at the common sailors who ventured to approach him.

Joe was a fair example of the type that is the visitation of seamen ashore. Jack Tar is the most prodigal of existing beings, either with the earnings in his pocket or with those he has yet to toil for, and he bears with far too much resignation the knavery of these shipping masters. With all its romance, life on the ocean wave is a dreary and precarious enough existence to the man before the mast, yet many are the nations that enhance the misery of his lot by tolerating these human sharks and their nefarious practices in their ports. When Jack comes ashore, his one desire, in most cases, is to spend his accumulated earnings as soon as possible. At sea, money is the most worthless of commodities. The man in the forecastle on a long voyage would not sell his share of the soggy " plum-duff " that comes with his Sunday dinner for a month's wages in cash. Small wonder, then, that he is lavish with his pounds and shillings during his few days ashore, and that he rarely thinks of shipping again until his last coin is spent. It is then that the careless prodigal falls an easy prey to Portuguese Joe and his ilk. Joe boasted of " never having done a tap of work " in his life. His mixture of Portuguese and negro blood had made him a tolerably quick-witted fellow, with considerable tact, as that quality goes among seafaring men. He had picked up a practicable use of most of the European languages, and enough knowledge of the niceties of French law to know how far he

could go with impunity in fleecing his victims. In various ways he had ingratiated himself with captains and the agents of ships sailing from Marseilles, until he had become one of several absolute monarchs in that port over slow-witted, spendthrift Jack Tar. Was business going badly? Then Joe was down aboard some ship talking his way with his oily tongue into a seat at the captain's table. Were sailors in demand? Then he was picking them up everywhere, giving them a meal or two, and shipping them off with nothing but a bag of ragged "gear" to show for the month or six weeks' advance on their wages, which he hastened back to throw on the gambling table or to spend in the nasty vices of a great seaport. To be sure, some of this money would have gone the same way if the sailor had received it. But one could more easily have tolerated its squandering by the man who had undergone the sufferings and privations of a long voyage to earn it, and at least we "beachcombers" should have been spared the sight of Portuguese Joe and his cronies, strutting back and forth across the Place Victor Gélu, and putting their heads together to evolve new schemes for robbing other victims.

There were few accommodations in Joe's hovel, and on the second day I was transferred to a seamens' boarding house in the dingy backwater of the Avenue de la République. The establishment was run by Joe's brother, a burly mulatto known in all the lower quarters of the city as "Portuguese Pete" who, like his brother, lay claim to no family name; and by his wife, a slatternly white woman of French parentage. In the windowless upper story were a score of foul nests that ranked as beds. The one to which I was assigned was a broken-backed cot. After a vain attempt to sleep, doubled up like a pocket-knife, amid the uproar of my roommates, who were snoring in several languages, I crept down stairs to borrow a plank from the kitchen wood-pile, and propping up the pallet, fell asleep. Some time must have passed, for I was in deep slumber and not even the house cat was stirring, when the cot, mattress, bedding, and prop came down with a crash that certainly awakened the policeman in the next block, and left me entangled in a Gordian knot of sheets and counterpanes of the width of a ship's hawser. I slept on the floor during the rest of my stay with Portuguese Pete.

There was one advantage — and one only — gained by the change from the Asile to this new lodging. The habits of Pete and his spouse were by no means as austere as those of the monks who turned us out into the cold, grey dawn. The meals we were to pay so dearly for,

when we shipped, were on a par with the sleeping accommodations. Each morning, after taking turns in pounding on the proprietor's door for an hour or two, we usually succeeded in inducing his consort to descend, in négligé and a vicious temper, to serve us each a cup of tepid water with a smell of chickory about it, and a wedge of bread. At noon and night we did duty alternately before the black, smoky fire-place, in assisting Madame Pete to prepare the soup and macaroni that were served in painfully meager quantities with bread and brackish wine. Like the pupils of Squeers, we dared not ask for more, lest we call down upon our heads the mighty wrath of Pete.

Pete spoke a cosmopolitan language, an Esperanto of his own making, concocted from all the tongues represented around his board, with no partiality or predeliction for any particular one. He who did not know at least French, English, Italian, and Portuguese or Spanish, with something of the patois of Provence, had small chance of catching more than the drift of Pete's remarks. English words with Italian endings, Portuguese words with a French pronunciation, French words that started out well enough but ended with a nondescript grunt, all uttered in a voice that made the rafters ring and the wine-glasses on the table dance excitedly, were the daily accompaniments of our gatherings. Yet Pete, with all his bellow, was the exact antithesis of his brother. He had spent years before the mast and had been rated an excellent sailor, before he drifted into Marseilles and became the understudy of unscrupulous Joe. He was as slow of wit as the seamen who quailed before his wife's bleary eye — and as for tact! The only influence or coercion which Pete could bring to bear on those of his fellow-men who did not heed the roar of his mighty voice were his no less mighty fists. More than once he had threatened, like the giant Antiguan, to use these powerful arguments on his brother's anatomy; for Joe had never hesitated, when there was something to be gained by it, to entrap Pete in the meshes of his Machiavelian plots. As when, during a season of sharp demand for sailors, he had generously served Pete with "knock-out drops," dragged him on board a ship bound for the fever-infected, west-African coast, and made merry with the two months' advance offered for any seaman that could be captured. But Joe let himself be caught only in the glare of daylight and on the public squares, and there the wrath of Pete and many another who had fought his way back to Marseilles with the avowed intention of throttling the rascally half-breed, had vanished at the sound of that

oily tongue. Pete was kind-hearted and prodigal by nature, and years in the forecastle had by no means cured him of these faults. Those who knew told tales of his favors to boarders and of the groaning of his table in the days of prosperity. But evil times had fallen on Marseilles and, like my fellow-boarders, I always left Pete's hovel with a gnawing hunger, and divided my days between following the clue of some job and wandering with envious eyes through the market-places.

The band that rose from our table to follow Pete to the ship-chandler's office or to tramp at Joe's heels, by night or by day, to the far end of the breakwater, in pursuit of a rumor that a ship was "signing on," was as variegated in experience as in color. Two hulking, good-hearted Baltimore negroes were the heroes of the party. In a strike riot of two months before they had been arrested for killing a gendarme, a crime of which they were really, though unintentionally, guilty. The prosecution, however, had not succeeded in proving a case against them. The older had been sentenced to sixty days and the younger, who had been shot during the mélée, was left to recuperate in the city hospital. They burst in upon us almost at the same time during my first days at Pete's, and took the head of the board at once. Two nights later the hospital patient — a youth of nineteen — gave an exhibition of cool, collected grit that is rarely equaled even among seafaring men. A half-dozen of us had stepped into a cabaret in the unconventional section of the city. A quarrel began over some question of racial dislike. In the free-for-all battle that ensued an Italian drew a long, double-edged sheath knife and sprang for the youth from Baltimore. The latter had scarcely finished knocking down another assailant but, without stepping aside ever so little, he calmly grasped the finely ground blade in his left hand, and while the blood gushed down his forearm, as the Italian strove to twist the knife out of his grip of iron, he drew from his hip-pocket a razor, opened it behind his back as tranquilly as for a morning shave, and slashed his opponent from ear to chin. With the Italian's neck-tie bound tightly around his wrist, he marched homeward, singing plantation ballads at the top of his voice, washed his mutilated palm in a bucket, tied it up with the tail of a shirt, and sallied forth in quest of new adventures.

As near-heroes, there was a stocky little Spaniard, once a *banderillero,* who had abandoned the bull-ring for the forecastle with a dozen scars from sharp horns on his neck and body. His tales were rivaled

by a Jamaican negro, the only survivor of a shipwrecked crew, who had risen to power in a South-Sea island, and by an Australian who was credited with having thirty-six wives. An Italian who had been on the operatic stage — what for, we could not find out; a Finn who chewed tobacco while he ate; and a run-away boy from Madeira, who flooded his macaroni with tears so regularly that his portion was always served unsalted, were likewise on exhibition. Then there was "Antoine de la Ceinture" (Tony of the Belt). Tony was one of the last-but-not-least sort. Were we bound for the chandler's office? Then Tony could be trusted to bring up the rear. Was dinner late in being served? It was because Tony had not yet put in an appearance. Was Joe lining us up for inspection before some skipper? Then everyone knew without looking that it was Tony who answered to his name at the end of the line. But Tony's most remarkable feature was his belt. Many of the workmen of France wear in lieu of suspenders, long, gaily-colored sashes. Yet no belt in the length and breadth of France could rival Tony's. It was as red as the blood that flowed on the night of the mélée — when Tony had lived up to his reputation by being the farthest from the center of action; — it was a good yard wide and longer than the longest royal brace ever rove through a block; and forty times each day Tony must unwind it from around his waist, give an end to one of us, with a warning to keep it stretched to its full width, and march off down the street with the other end. There he would take the first turn around his body, pull the sash taut; and with a flutter of coat-tails and arms, up the street would come Tony, spinning round and round as if carried along by a whirlwind, until he reached his temporary valet, when he would heave a sigh of regret because the belt was not longer, or brighter, or wider, or did n't make him look enough like the spool on which a bolt of cloth is wound, or for some other reason quite beyond our comprehension; and, tucking in the end, would tag at the *qucue* of our company to some other section of the city, there to unwind and wind himself up again.

Workers were a drug on the market in Marseilles. There was one happy day when, in wandering about the *vieux port,* where the fleet of "wind-jammers" was rolling and pitching in a heavy gale, I was promised extraordinary wages by the captain of a clumsy barkentine, flying the checkerboard Greek flag, to help his depleted crew move the craft to a safer mooring. He had picked up the Antiguan and — strange to relate — Tony of the Belt; and together we tugged

My entrance into Paris in the corduroy garb and with the usual amount of baggage of the first months of the trip

"Tony of the Belt"

at hawser and brace for several hours, while the barkentine under our feet seemed undetermined after each roll whether to right herself again or turn turtle. But we got her re-moored at last, and the three francs which the skipper dropped into my hand had a merry jingle which I had almost forgotten. A day's work in the fish-market won me as much more, and I seemed to have struck prosperity when, the following morning, I spent three hours in rolling wine-barrels onto harbor trucks. But the only reward which the truckman and the official taster offered when the task was done was "all the wine you can hold," and my humble capacity forced me to accept much less than union wages. The six-franc fortune dwindled gradually away, though I spent it sparingly to supplement the meager fare of Pete's table, or for an occasional investment of two sous in tobacco. The French government does not sell the weed in such small quantities. But "beachcombers" hesitated to spend a half-franc all at once, especially as the invariable word of greeting from seemingly countless acquaintances was, "Any smokin' on you, Jack?" and the dealers — indifferent to the law and with an eye to business — broke up the legal ten-sous packets into ten two-sous lots, in their own wrappings. There were fellow-boarders who laughed at my extravagance. *They* sallied forth in the morning before the street-sweepers had made their daily round, and tramped up and down the Cannebière, a main thoroughfare which evening promenaders littered with cigar and cigarette butts. But the Anglo-Saxons, for the most part, refused to employ their talents in "shooting snipes on the Can o' Beer."

The boarding-masters of Marseilles refused to believe my assertion that I was bound away from, and not towards, my native land. Three times during my stay with Pete, I was called upon to sign on — once on a collier for Algiers, and twice on tramps bound for the "States." My refusal to accept these berths aroused the ire of Joe; and, on the day following the sailing of the last craft, I was turned out dinnerless from Pete's domicile on a world that had grown decidedly cold for a southern country. I could not greatly regret this ejection; it left Joe unable to make a demand on my wages, should I ever sign on. My list of acquaintances had increased; on some occasions I had spent a few sous to relieve the hunger of some unhoused beachcomber, and the thoughtfulness stood me now in good stead. As I wandered from Pete's house down to the Place de la Joliette, I fell upon one of these, a little, wizened Alexandrian Jew, who had "just made a haul of a franc" which, with that un-

selfishness universal "on the beach," he offered at once to share. That night I found myself again in the crowd before the Asile de Nuit.

Quarrels were frequent among the destitutes who collected at the asylum, but not often was it the scene of such a tragedy as was enacted on this frosty evening. Five minutes after I had joined the group before the building, a begrimed and tattered youth strolled up to within a few feet of me, glanced about him, pulled a revolver from his pocket, fired instantly at a group of vagabonds who chatted on the curb ten feet away, and dashed off towards the harbor. The victim, a German who could not have been over twenty, fell with scarcely a groan, rolled off the sidewalk into the gutter, gave a few convulsive kicks, and lay still. A doctor arrived as he was being carried into the office. He had been shot directly through the heart. My first impulse, when two gendarmes began inscribing the names of witnesses, was to offer my testimony. Luckily, it occurred to me in time that justice is a slow process in France, and that authorities are none too kind in their methods of assuring the presence in court of such witnesses as lodge at an Asile de Nuit. To be delayed in Marseilles several months would have put an end to my wanderings before they had well begun; I backed towards the outskirts of the increasing crowd and made answer to the excited officer with the book; —"Moi, monsieur? Je viens d'arriver."

The assassin was taken, before morning, and his story added to the annals of "the road." The dead man had been his companion during his Wanderjahre in Servia. The few dollars that had been their common possession he had trusted to his comrade — no unusual custom among tramps. At a dismal mountain village the treasurer had decamped, leaving the other to the tender mercies of the Servian police. When he was released from several weeks of imprisonment as a vagrant, the deserted man determined to have revenge. By methods peculiar to trampdom, and with a persistency that would have done credit to the best of detectives, he had tracked the absconder through Montenegro, the Turkish coast-towns, and Italy, only to lose all trace of him in Genoa. A chance meeting put him on the trail again; he tramped to Marseilles and ran the German youth to earth five months after his act of treachery. The sympathy of the beachcombers was entirely with the assassin. In the moral code of "the road" there are few crimes more iniquitous than that of the dead man. But sympathy availed him nothing, for months afterward the youth was guillotined in the Place Victor Gélu, that dreary square in

which Portuguese Joe and penniless seamen were accustomed to "hang around."

When excitement had abated somewhat, the Asile was thrown open — not for me, however. The second frère received my papers from his superior, as on the first night, but squinted at me above his glasses.

"Lodged here before?" he demanded.

"Yes."

"When?"

"Two weeks ago."

"Then I can't admit you."

"But I only stayed five of my eight days."

"Ça ne fait rien! When you have been admitted once you can't come back again for six months. Allez-vous en!"

This mandate proved inexorable. When I attempted to argue the matter a burly doorkeeper sent me spinning into the street. I wandered away through the city and, towards midnight, turned down to the wharves. An empty box car stood behind a warehouse. I crawled inside to find it already occupied by three English sailors of former acquaintance. To sleep was impossible, for it was bitter cold. After a couple of hours of shivering on the icy floor of the car, we crept out and took to tramping up and down the streets and byways — that most dismal experience, known professionally as "carrying the banner"— until daybreak.

Long, hungry days passed, days in which I could scarcely withstand the temptation to carry my kodak to the *mont de piété* just off the sailors' square. Among the beachcombers there were daily some who gained a few francs, by an odd job, by the sale of an extra garment, or by "grafting," pure and simple. When his hand closed on a bit of money, the stranded fellow may have been weak with fasting. Yet his first thought was not to gorge himself, but to share his fortune with his companions under hatches. In those bleak November days, many a man, ranked a "worthless outcast" by his more fortunate fellow-beings, toiled all day at the coal-wharves of Marseilles, and tramped back, cold and hungry, to the Place Victor Gélu to divide his earning with other famished *misérables,* whom he had not known a week before. More than one man sold the only shirt he owned to feed a new arrival who was an absolute stranger to all. These men won no praise for their benefactions. They expected none, and would have opened their eyes in wonder if they had been told that their actions were worthy of praise. The stranded band grew to be

a corporate body. By a job here and there I contributed my share to the common fund, and between us we fought off gaunt starvation. In a dirty alley just off the Place was an inn kept by a Greek, in which one could sleep on the floor at three sous, or in a cot at six; and every evening a band of ragged mortals might have been seen dividing the earnings of some of them into three-sou lots as they made their way towards *l'Auberge chez le Grec.*

One spot in all Marseilles was the sole oasis in this desert of dreariness and desolation, the Sailors' Home. Here, as winter drove us away from the sunny side of the breakwater, where we had been able to swim in early November, we congregated around the roaring stove to discuss the hopelessness of the situation, and to peruse the newspapers that kept us somewhat in touch with the moving world outside. But when dusk fell, the doors were closed behind us, and the biting air and the squalor of other quarters were only increased by contrast. I turned in at the Home one morning, to find that misfortune had overtaken the three Englishmen of the box car. My first acquaintance had arrived in Marseilles in the thinnest of overalls and jumper. Man can endure far more than most of us suspect; but night after night out of doors in such garb had broken the health of the Englishman, and the gendarme who had found him unconscious on the wharf had bundled him off to the Home. Sick as he was, it took four days of official red-tape and nonsense to get him admitted to the hospital, and it was only by strenuous efforts that we were able to pay his bad *chez le Grec* while the question was pending. His two companions had deserted from the British navy in Buenos Ayres, changed in name and dress, and signed on a "wind-jammer" for Genoa. To escape the king's service had cost them months of labor and danger, a year's wages, and their possessions. Nothing will better indicate the misery of Marseilles on strike than the fact that, with six months' imprisonment at Gibraltar and a re-serving of their time in prospect, they had resolved to endure "the beach" no longer, and had marched up to the consul's office to give themselves up. They were held under arrest at the Home for the first British steamer for the Rock.

There were those among the beachcombers who would not be outdone by the force of circumstances, who put on a bold front and set out to get the "living the world owed them." In beggardom as in the world at large, the brazenface carries the day, and the modest and unassuming are pushed into the background. Among the first vic-

tims of this class, in foreign ports, are the consuls. There was in Marseilles a certain Welshman who won fame for his exploits during this season. Signed off in Barcelona, he had made his way to the French port, and had received from the British consul, within an hour of his arrival, two francs and a promise of clothes, next day. In the morning, as per promise, he was well fitted out and given another franc. He promptly hunted up a pawn shop, got back into his rags, and made tracks for the nearest wine-shop. Next morning, penniless, he was back early to see the consul, spun a pathetic yarn, and came out with two more francs. This amount, however, could not last long in a café. The Welshman pocketed the money, marched over to the American consulate, and proved so satisfactorily that Pittsburg was his home that two more francs were added to his collection. Day after day new variations of his story were sprung in all sections of the city. On his ability to speak some German, he "worked" the Austrian, Swiss, and German consuls, besides several foreign charitable societies. These institutions gave only clothing for the most part, but one of the Welshman's experience had little difficulty in turning them into money.

Meanwhile, he was "pumping" his own consul, who twice more fitted him out, only to have him turn up again next morning as ragged and unkempt as ever. The consul was not blind, but when a vagabond sits down in your office and refuses to move until he receives a franc, it is often cheaper to give it than to take time to throw him out. The day came, however, when the consul determined to put an end to this system of blackmail, and, after giving the customary franc one morning, he ordered the Welshman not to come back again under pain of arrest. Bright and early the next morning the "beachcomber" turned up, a strong smell of absinthe entering the room with him.

"Good morning, consul," he burst out, gaily, and loud enough to be heard by those of us who were listening outside, "I wonder if you can spare me a couple of francs for a morning bite?"

The consul stepped to the telephone and called for a policeman. A few minutes later, a gendarme pushed past us, stepped inside, and received orders to put the offender under arrest. But the Welshman, who lolled undisturbed in an office chair through all this, had taken the trouble to make himself familiar with the fine points of international law. He grasped a heavy ruler from the table as the officer approached.

"If that Frog-eater touches me, I 'll brain 'im," he shouted, "I 'm a

British subject on British soil, and no bloody Frenchman can arrest me!"

The consul knew only too well the truth of this assertion. A French officer has no more authority within the borders of a foreign consulate than on London Bridge, and any injury which the Welshman might do the gendarme in resisting arrest would come under the head of justifiable self-defense. The consul, however, had police powers in his own office. He took the belligerent seaman by the arm, led him outside onto the soil of France, and turned him over to the policeman. The officer conducted him to the station-house across the way, while several of us tagged after him.

"Where was he arrested?" demanded the sergeant.

"In the British consulate, monsieur."

"Vraiment! And the British consul has sent money for his keeping while he is shut up, eh?"

"Non, monsieur."

"Non? Then what do you mean by bringing him over here? Allez! Vous!" and the Welshman, who knew all this process, move by move, made a deep bow to the sergeant, stuck his thumbs in the armholes of his tattered vest, strutted out across the park, and back into the consulate.

"Good morning, consul!" he cried, with the blandest of smiles, and extending a gnarled and far from clean hand. "I've just escaped from grave danger, consul, and I've come back to see if, perhaps, you haven't changed your mind about that couple of francs."

The consul looked him over, glanced at the stack of letters and official papers that demanded his attention, and, with the sheepish look of a man who feels he is being made game of, admitted that he had.

There ran through the shipping quarters one morning the rumor that the "Dag" was signing on a crew. She was a tiny wooden brigantine under Norwegian colors, anchored in the vieux port. She carried a mere handful of men, was reported as "the hungriest hell that ever weighed an anchor," and did not look seaworthy enough to cross an inland lake. Moreover she was bound for Madagascar by way of the Cape of Good Hope, a six-month trip at least. This was not the route I had mapped out for myself. But it was eastward, twenty-five days in Marseilles had left me ready to jump at any chance, and I raced down to the old harbor with the rest. It was only a chance meeting with "Dutch Harry," another of the rascally boarding masters of the

port, that saved me from putting my name on the "Dag's" articles. "Dutch" had a contract with the agents of a tramp steamer from Boston to supply a force of seamen to paint the vessel in harbor; and an hour later I was hanging over the side on a swinging plank with the waves of the râde washing over my feet, daubing paint on the rusty hull. The boarding master received six francs a day for our labor — and paid us two and a half. But we took our meals with the crew — whenever the captain was ashore — and I saved enough to come to the assistance of several of my fellow destitutes, among whom was the wizened Jew, who had once more fallen on evil days.

This work lasted several days. I was mixing paint on deck, one afternoon, when the chief mate, strolled by, sauntered back, turned to look away across the harbor as though he had not seen me within five feet of him, and muttered as to himself, "We 're going out to-night, homeward bound for Boston. The company don't allow us any too many men. If some of these painters was found stowed away on 'er after the pilot left 'er, I don't suppose the old man would do a hell of a lot o' kicking." Then he turned until he could glance at me out of the tail of his eye, looked off across the harbor once more, swung round on his heel, and marched aft.

If the ship had been eastward bound, the mate's hint would have fallen on fertile soil. Several painters disappeared during the afternoon and they did not go ashore. I took supper with the crew when the day was done, watched from the pier-head as the newly-painted vessel turned her prow to the open sea, and hurried back to the dwelling of the boarding master. "Dutch" was indeed wrathy — especially as I had called for two and a half francs that he had considered safe in his pocket. When I opened the door of his wine-shop, he stared at me from behind a dense cloud of smoke and a tall bottle of greenish contents for several moments. Then with a roar that only Portuguese Pete of all Marseilles could have equaled, he burst out, "Why, you damn fool, why in hell did n't you stow away on that tub? Did n't you know she was Boston bound?"

"Aye," I answered. "But I told you, you remember, I 'm not homeward bound."

Several ships bound for Egypt signed on a man or two during the next few days, but they were all "boarding-house stiffs." When the mate of the P & O yacht *Vectis* sent to the Home for an English quartermaster, I fancied my time had come, as there was not another English-speaking sailor "on the beach" after the arrest of the de-

serters. But the P & O ships only Britons. The next day my first acquaintance was released from the hospital and secured the berth.

The last day of November, a month after my arrival in Marseilles, found me still gazing out upon the Château d'If and up at the ship's ball on the summit of Notre Dame de la Garde, and still tramping sorrowfully up and down the breakwater and the endless wharves. But with the new month my luck changed. The *Warwickshire* of the Bibby Line, plying between England and Burma, put in at Marseilles to await her overland passengers and sent out a call for a sailor. I was the first man on board, displayed my discharge from the cattle boat, and was called into the cabin.

"It don't tell in this discharge whether you are an A. B. or not," said the mate. "Are you?"

"I am an A. B.," I replied, though I meant quite a different sort of A. B. from what the mate understood by my answer. I was signed on at once, and the next day I watched the familiar harbor of Marseilles grow smaller and smaller until it faded away on the horizon.

CHAPTER VI

THE ARAB WORLD

ON a placid sea the *Warwickshire* sped eastward, sighting the mountain ranges of Corsica and Sardinia, and sweeping through the straits of Messina so close to the Sicilian shore that we could make out plainly, from the deck, the evening strollers on the brightly-lighted promenade. The crew was East Indian. The white quartermasters with whom I messed were gorged with such food as only a French chef can cook, and valiantly I struggled to make up for those famished days in the dismal streets of Marseilles. My official duties were largely confined to "polishin' 'er brasses," and, with all due modesty, I assert that the ship was the brighter for my presence. The Bibby Line scorned to carry any but first-class passengers. I took my "watch below" within easy hailing distance of the promenade deck and those belinened voyagers to whom the custom of tipping for every possible service had become second nature, and picked up many a franc and six-pence among them.

On the morning of the fifth day out the brasses were pronounced in a satisfactory condition, and I was ordered into the hold, with a score of the native crew, to send up the trunks of Egyptian travelers. The weather grew perceptibly warmer with every throb of the engines. When I climbed on deck after the last chest, the deep blue of the ocean had turned to a shabby brown, but the horizon was still unbroken. Suddenly there rose from the sea, on our starboard bow, as a marionette bobs up in a puppet-show, a flat-topped building, then another and another, until a whole village, the houses of which seemed to sit like gulls on the ruddy sea, spread out before us. It was Port Saïd. The pilot-boat had swung alongside and the statue of de Lesseps was plainly visible before we caught the first glimpse of land, a narrow stretch of reddish desert sand beyond the town. Slowly the *Warwickshire* nosed her way into the canal, the anchor ran out with a rattle and roar of cable, and there swarmed upon our decks a countless multitude of humans, that seemed the denizens of some remote and unknown sphere.

Darkness fell soon after. I had signed on the *Warwickshire* under a promise that I might leave her at Port Saïd. Through all the voyage, however, the quartermasters had spent the hours of the dog-watch in pouring into my ears tales of the horrors that had befallen white men stranded among the Arabs. The shrieks that rose from the maze of buildings ashore, the snarling, scowling mobs that raced about our decks, called back these stories all too vividly. In the blackest of nights, this new and unknown world was in imagination peopled with diabolical creatures lying in wait for lone mortals who might venture ashore unarmed and well-nigh penniless. If I escaped a quick assassination among these black hordes, a lingering starvation on this neck of sand might be my lot. The captain had given me leave to continue to Rangoon. An Englishman, returning to the Burmese district he governed, had promised me a well-salaried position. Most foolhardy it seemed to halt in this "dumping ground of rascality" when in a few days I might complete half my journey around the globe and find a ready employment.

For an hour I sat undecided, staring into the black inferno beyond the wharves. Palestine and Egypt, however, were lands too famous to be lightly passed by. I bade farewell to the astonished quartermasters, collected my few days' wages from the mate, and with some two pounds in francs, lire, and shillings in my pocket, dropped into a *feluca* and was rowed ashore.

A scene typically Oriental graced my landing. In my ignorance, I had neglected to spend a half-hour in bargaining with the swarthy boatman before stepping into his craft. That the legal fare I paid him was posted conspicuously on the wharf made him none the less assertive in his demands. For an hour he dogged my footsteps, howling threats or whining pleas in a cracked treble, now in his native Arabic, now in such English as he could muster. The summary vengeance of the Islamites, prophesied with such fullness of detail by my shipmates, seemed at hand; but I shook the fellow off at last and set out to find a lodging.

The task at which I had grown so proficient in Europe was a far more difficult problem in this strange world. To be sure, there were several hotels along the avenue facing the wharves, before which well-dressed white men lounged at little tables; and black, barefooted waiters flitted back and forth, carrying cool drinks that we of America are wont to associate with August mid-days rather than with December evenings. But a strong financial backing is nowhere so indispen-

sable as in hostelries offering "European accommodations" in the Orient. There were, undoubtedly, scores of native inns in the maze of hovels into which I plunged at the first step off the avenue, but how distinguish them when the only signs that met my eye were as meaningless as so many spatters of ink? Even in Holland I had been able to guess at shop names. But Arabic! I had not the remotest idea whether the ensign before me announced a lodging house or the quarters of an undertaker. I returned to the avenue; but the few white men who paused to listen to my inquiry for a "native" hotel stared at me as at one who had lost his wits, and passed on with a shrug of the shoulders. A long evening I pattered in and out of crooked byways, bumping now and then into a swarthy Mussulman who snarled at me and made off, and bringing up here and there in some dismal blind alley. Fearful of wandering too far from the lighted square, I turned back toward the harbor and suddenly caught sight of a sign in English: "Catholic Sailors' Home." Whether the establishment was Catholic or Coptic was small matter, so long as it announced itself in a human language, and I dashed joyfully towards it.

The "Home" comprised little more than a small reading-room. Half-hidden behind the stacks of ragged magazines sat the "manager," a Maltese boy, huddled over paper and pencil and staring disconsolately at an Italian-English grammar. I stepped forward and offered my assistance, and together we waded through an interminable lesson. Before we had ended, six tattered white men wandered in and carefully chose books over which to fall asleep.

"You must know," said the manager, as he closed the grammar, "that there am no sleepings here. And we closes at eleven. But I am fix you oop. I am shelter all these seamans while I lose my place when the Catholic society found it out."

He peered out into the night, locked the doors, blew out the lights, and aroused the sleepers. We groped our way along a stone-paved corridor to the back of the building.

"You are getting in here," said the Maltese, pulling open what proved by morning light to be a heavy pair of shutters, "but be quietness."

I climbed through after the others. A companion struck a match that lighted up a stone room eight feet square, once the kitchen of the Home. Closely packed as we were, it soon grew icy cold on the stone floor. Two "beachcombers" rose with exclamations of disgust

and crawled out through the window, to tramp up and down the corridor. I groped my way to a coffin-shaped cupboard in one corner, laid it lengthwise on the floor, pulled out the shelves, and, crawling inside, closed the doors above me. My sleep was unbroken until morning.

By the light of day my bedfellows, squatted against the wall of the corridor, formed a heterogeneous group. At one end sat a Boer dressed in heavy, woolen garments of the veldt, of a faded, weather-beaten condition startlingly in keeping with the bronzed and be-whiskered countenance of the wearer. A seedy Austrian youth lolled open-mouthed between the South African and an oily Turk. A Liberian negro was sharing a mangled crust with a Russian Finn, half-hidden behind a forest of unpruned whiskers. A ragged Englishman stood stiffly erect near the door.

We found ample time to divulge the secrets of our past before the turnkey came to release us. With the Englishman I strolled down to the harbor. Myriads of "coaling niggers," in dirty, loose robes, as indistinguishable one from another as ants, swarmed up the sides of newly-arrived ships, or returned, jaded and begrimed, in densely packed boat-loads, from a night of toil. The custom police, big, pompous negroes beside whom the Arabs seemed light colored, strutted back and forth within the wharf enclosure. As each band of heavers arrived, the officers laid aside their brilliant fezes, slipped over their gay uniforms a bag-like garment that covered them to their gaitered shoes, and gathered the workmen, one by one, in a loving embrace.

"Affectionate fellows, these followers of the prophet," I mused.

"Aye," croaked my companion, "and bloody good smugglers, dressed in them dirty skys'ls."

They live in coal, these heavers of Port Saïd. Their beds, their wives, their children, the merchants with whom they come in contact, even the little baked fish which bleary-eyed females sell them outside the gates, are covered with its dust.

The Englishman knew of but one "graft" in Port Saïd. Each day, at noon, the friars of a Catholic monastery served dinner to the penniless. A crowd overwhelmingly Oriental lined up with us under the trees of the convent garden to await the serene pleasure of the tawny Arab who dispensed the charity of the priests. Between a Tartar and a Nubian, I received, after long delay, a deep tin-plate, a pewter spoon, and a misshapen slice of bread. The entire party had lost hope of obtaining anything more edible, when the monasterial

servant appeared once more, straining painfully along with a huge caldron of soup, which he deposited on the flat grave-stone of a defunct friar. As we filed by him, the Arab tossed at each of us a ladleful of the boiling concoction. Whether it landed in our plates or distributed itself generously over our nether garments depended entirely on our own dexterity, for the haughty server dumped the ladle where, in his opinion, our dishes ought to have been, utterly indifferent as to whether they were there or not.

The Englishman disappeared next day, and I joined fortunes with the seedy Austrian. With a daily dinner and a lodging, even in a cupboard, assured, I found Port Saïd a more agreeable halting-place than Marseilles. There was work to be had here, too. On this second afternoon we were stretched out on the breakwater, under the shadow of the statue of de Lesseps, watching the coming and going of the pilot-boats and the sparkle of the canal that dwindled to a thread on the far horizon of the yellow desert, when a portly Greek approached and asked, in Italian, if we wanted employment. We did, of course, and followed him back to land and off to the westward along the beach to a hovel in the native section. On the earth floor sat two massive stone mortars. The Greek motioned to us to seat ourselves before them, poured into them some species of small nut, and handed each of us a stone pestle. When we had fallen to work, he sat down on a stool, prepared his *narghileh* and, except for an occasional wave of the hand as a signal to us to empty the mortars of the beaten pulp and refill them, remained utterly motionless for the rest of the day.

Mechanically we pounded hour after hour. The pestles were heavy when we began, before the day was done my own weighed at least a ton. What we were beating up and what, in the name of Allah, we were beating it up for, I do not know to this day. The Austrian asserted that he knew the use of the product, but fell silent when I asked to be enlightened. Night sounds were drifting in through the door of the hovel when the Greek signed to us to stop, and with the air of one who feels himself to be over-generous but proud of his fault, handed each of us five small piastres (12½ cents). My companion at once raised his voice in vociferous protest, in which, at a nudge of his elbow, I joined. The Greek was hurt to the point of tears. The ingratitude of man, when he had, out of the kindness of his heart, given us a whole day's wages for a half-day's work! How could we bring ourselves to complain when he had cut his own profit in half simply because we were men of his own color for whom he felt an

down" the salesman. The officer heaved a sigh of relief when I handed him without protest the five piastres demanded, and I passed on, still wondering why I had been taxed. The paper was in French as well as Turkish and informed me that I had paid for disinfection.

Some time after the last man had paid his fee — the female passengers had mysteriously disappeared — a second door swung open, an official folded our papers, tore a round hole in them, and we entered a room containing several long tables. An unwashed and officious Arab handed to each of us a garment not unlike a scanty nightshirt, and ordered us to strip. When our wardrobes had been laid out on the tables in separate heaps, a half-dozen ragged urchins appeared, rolled each heap into a bundle, and disappeared through a tight-fitting steel door. Disinfecting a Frank was, evidently, a new problem in the Lazeret of Beirut. An urchin stared at my clothing, bawled something to the unwashed official, and passed me by. The officer picked my garments up one by one with a puzzled air, handed me my sweater and suspenders, as if he did not feel that such mysterious articles could be rated as clothing, and sped away with the rest.

A long hour passed. The nightshirts lent their wearers neither dignity nor modesty. My own had been designed for the smallest of Arabs and did a white man meager service, but the jabbering natives would not have been in the least disturbed if their wardrobe had been reduced to the fig leaf of notorious past. The steel door opened. We filed into the next room and found our disinfected bundles arrayed on more long tables and steaming like newly-boiled cabbages. As rapidly as the garments cooled, I attired myself and turned out upon a tiny square before the Lazeret. Suddenly there rang out a cry for passports. An icy bubble ran up and down my spine, but I stepped boldly forward and thrust my letter of introduction into the face of a diminutive, white-haired officer at the gate. He received it gingerly, as if expecting it to explode in his hands, turned it up sidewise, upside down, sidewise once more, and, certain that he had found its proper position, began to run his finger up and down the lines, mumbling to himself and shaking his head sagely from side to side. Slowly he turned, eyed me suspiciously, and after several preliminary gurgles, wheezed: "Paseeporto? Paseeporto?"

"Sure, it's a passeporto!" I replied, nodding my head vigorously. The officer glanced from the paper to my façe and back at the paper several times, plainly as helpless before a problem for which he knew no precedent as a child. The doctor who had made out our disinfec-

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coins are worth the same as a bishleek — except not quite — that is — here — if they have a hole in them they are worth a copper and three-fourths — more — that is, here — in Damascus they are worth a copper and one-fourth more, and this dish-shaped one is worth three bishleeks and three metleeks and two coppers and sometimes three-fourths of a copper more, except they with holes in them which are worth two metleeks and a copper and a half more, and this mejeedieh is worth in Damascus seven bishleeks and seven metleeks and two coppers and sometimes three and sometimes here not so much by two and a half coppers and in Jerusalem —"

"And suppose it is a rainy day?"

"Oh, that does not make any difference," said the clerk, with owl-like solemnity, "but sometimes on busy days, as on feast days, the bishleek is worth three coppers and a half more — that is, here — in Damascus it is worth two more and sometimes not so much — as in Ramadan, and in Sidon it is worth three-fourths of a copper less and in — here in Beirut —"

"Hold on, efendee," I cried. "If you have a pencil and a ream of paper at hand —"

I understood his explanation perfectly, of course, but I had an unconquerable dread of forgetting it in my sleep.

"Certainly," cried the obliging clerk, and he dragged forth two sheets of paper and covered both with figures. Reduced to writing, the monetary system of Syria was simplicity itself. One could see through it as easily as through six inches of armor plate.

"Now, in carting this around —" I asked, tucking the sheets of paper away in a pocket, "you don't hire a porter —"

"Ah," said the clerk, "you have not the large purse? Our Syrians carry a purse which is very long, which is long like the stocking which it is said are worn by the lady; but if you have not such a long purse and you have not any ladies —" I drew out a large handkerchief and fell to raking the heap of coins into it. "Ah," he cried, "that does very good, only you do not forget that in Damascus the mejeedieh is worth seven bishleeks and seven metleeks and two coppers and sometimes —" But I had escaped into the silence outside.

I reduced my burden somewhat by spending the heaviest pieces of junk for breakfast and, strolling down to the harbor, sat down on a pier. The bedlam of shrieking stevedores, braying camels, and the rattle of discharging ships drowned for some time all individual sounds. In a sudden lull, I caught faintly a shout in English behind me and

turned around. A lean native in European dress and fez was beckoning to me from the opening of one of the narrow streets. I dropped from the pier and turned shoreward. The native ran towards me. "You speak Eengleesh?" he cried, "Yes? No? What countryman you?"

"American."

"No? Not American?" shrieked the native, dancing up and down, "You not American? Ha! ha! ver' fine. I American one time, too. I be one time sailor on American warsheep Brooklyn. You know Brooklyn? Ver' nice sheep, Brooklyn. You write Eengleesh, too, No? Yes? Ver' fine! You like job? I got letters write in Eengleesh! Come, you!"

He led the way through the swarming bazaar, shouting answers to the questions I put to him. He claimed the name of Abdul Razac Bundak and the profession of "bumboat-man," one of those familiar figures of Oriental ports, a native who had picked up a fluent use of so-called English, the language of the shipping world, and turned it to practicable account. His activities were varied. He sold supplies to foreign ships, acted as interpreter for officers ashore, led tourists on sight-seeing expeditions, and, in the busy season, ran a sailors' boarding house.

Some distance back from the harbor, in a shoe shop kept by his uncle, I sat down to write three letters at Bundak's dictation. By the time we had finished them — and a dozen cigarettes — my familiarity with other languages had leaked out, and I wrote three more, two in French and one in Spanish. With one exception, all six were bids to ship captains accustomed to visit Beirut. The bumboat-man paid me two unknown coins, and "set up" a dinner in a neighboring shop.

That afternoon we piloted a party of Germans through the labyrinthian bazaars and out across the orange groves to Dog River. Abdul chattered in his pidgin English, and I strove to turn his uncouth speech into the language of the Fatherland. In the days that followed, our "company," as Abdul styled it, was the busiest in Beirut. The fame of Bundak's "faranchee secretary" spread abroad. The scribes who sat in their little stands in the market-places were called upon now and then to pen letters in some European language. Hitherto, they had refused such commissions. Now they despatched an urchin to the shop in Custom-House street, before which our "company" was wont to sit dreaming over narghilehs supplied by a neighboring café, and summoned us to some distant corner of the bazaars. The priest

As I appeared during my tramp in Asia Minor.
A picture taken by Abdul Razac Bundak, bumboat-man of Beirut

in his confessional was never entrusted with more secrets than fell from the lips of the scribes amid the droning of Bundak, the interpreter. Had those men of letters been less indolent, the volume of their business might well-nigh have doubled. But they insisted on exercising their profession after the laggard manner of the East, and ever and anon drifted away into the land of day-dreams with a sentence stranded on their lips. The palm of the left hand was the writing desk to which they were accustomed; it was always with difficulty that I stirred them up to clear a space on their littered stands. They and their fathers before them had always written from right to left; they stared in amazement when I began in the left-hand corner. More than one burst forth in vociferous protest at this unprecedented use of a pen, and long harangues from the senior member of our firm did not always convince them that the result of my labor was more than meaningless scratches. The fees of this new profession were never princely. The scribes themselves received no more than a bishleek for a letter, and must supply the materials. But even from the half of our share I added something each day to the scrap iron in my handkerchief.

When business lagged there were but two resources left to Abdul — to eat or to drink. Let his narghileh burn out before a summons came, and the bumboat-man rose with a yawn and we rambled away through the intricate windings of the bazaars to some tiny tavern, tucked away in an utterly unexpected corner. The keepers were always delighted to be awakened from their siestas by our "company." While we sat on a log or an upturned basket and sipped a glass of some native concoction which the proprietor placed on the ground — there being no floor — at our feet, Abdul spun long tales of the *faranchee* world. They were bold forays into the field of fiction, most of them, but with a live faranchee to serve as illustration, the shopkeepers were never critical and listened open-mouthed, after the fashion of all children of the East before a story teller.

There was really no reason why these taverns should not have supplied all our wants during the day, for the "free lunch" system, that has long been credited to America, is indigenous to Beirut. With every drink the keeper served a half-dozen tiny dishes of hazelnuts, radishes, peas in the pod, cold squares of boiled potatoes, and berries and vegetables known only in Syria. But Abdul was gifted with an inexhaustible appetite, and at least once after every transaction he led the way to one of the many eating-shops facing the busiest

streets and squares. In a gloomy grotto, the front of which was all door, stood two long tables of the roughest materials, flanked by rougher benches with barely space enough between them for the passage of clients. The proprietor rarely stirred from behind a great block of brick and mortar near the entrance, over which simmered a score of black kettles. I read the bill of fare by raising the covers of each caldron in succession, chose a dish of the least unfathomable mystery, picked up a discus-shaped loaf and a cruse of water from the bench at the entrance, and retreated to the rear. Whatever I chose, it was almost certain to contain mutton. The sheep appears in sundry and strange disguises in the Mohammedan world. The Arabian cook, however, sets nothing over the fire until he has cut it into small pieces, and each dinner was an almost unbroken succession of stews of varying tastes and colors. Each order, whether of meat or vegetables, we ate separately, with a bread-cake.

Abdul rarely concerned himself with the contents of the kettles, for his unrivaled favorite was a dish prepared by running alternately tiny cubes of liver and kidneys on a spit and revolving them over the glowing coals. I, too, should have ordered this delicacy more often had not Abdul, with his incurable "Eengleesh," persisted in referring to it as "kittens." I parted from the bumboat-man each evening; for, though his home was roomy enough, he was a true Mohammedan and would never have thought of introducing even his business partner into the same building with his wives. Beds were good and rates low in the native inns. Though we lived right royally in Beirut, my expenses were rarely twenty-five cents a day.

With all its mud and squalor there was something marvelously pleasing about this corner of the Arab world. The lazy droning of its shopkeepers, the roll of the incoming sea, the twitter of birds that spoke of summer and seemed to belie the calendar, above all, the picturesque contrast of orange trees bending under the ripening fruit that perfumed the soft air, with the snowdrifts almost within stone's throw on the peaks above, lent to the spot a charm unique. For all that, I should not have remained so long in Beirut by choice, for the road was long before me, and to each day I had allotted its portion of the journey. The traveler in the East, however, must learn that he cannot lay plans and expect to hold to them as at home. To the Oriental it is entirely immaterial whether he sets out to-day or to-morrow, and the view point of the Frank is beyond his grasp. Had you planned a departure for Monday and find

that some petty obstacle makes it impossible? "Oh! well," says the native, "Tuesday is as good a day as Monday. Wait until to-morrow." Does Tuesday bring some new difficulty? The native will repeat his consoling advice just as jauntily as if he had not worn it threadbare the day before. The expression "wasting time" has no meaning whatever to the Oriental. Twenty-four hours does not represent to him one-half the value of one of his miserable copper coins. A certain number of days must run by between his birth and death. What matters it just how he occupies himself during that period? He is, perhaps, a bit happier if a task already planned must be put off, for the postponement reduces the sum-total of exertion of his allotted span, and nothing does the Oriental hate so much as exertion.

The officials of the Porte, imbued with this philosophy of life, were in no haste to examine my papers. Not until my third visit to the consulate did the air of consternation with which the American representative met me at the door inform me that my letter had been returned.

"What the devil did you pass this note as a passport for?" shouted the consul; "Why, man, in ten years I never heard of a man entering Turkish territory without a passport — except one, and he was fined a hundred pounds."

"Tourist, was n't he?" I answered, "I 've found that workingmen pass more easily."

"In Europe, perhaps," said the consul, "but not here. Now don't venture into the interior until you have a teskereh — a local passport — unless you want to be shipped to one of the Sick Man's dungeons on the double quick."

Four days passed before this document, with its description of my features in the unfathomable orthography of the Turk, was ready. Even had I received it earlier, it is by no means certain that I could have set out for Damascus at once. Native or Frank, not a resident of Beirut admitted knowing which of her reeking alleyways led to the foothills to the eastward. Abdul threw up his hands in startled horror when I broached the subject of my intended journey. "Impossible!" he shrieked, "There is not road. You be froze in the snow before the Bedouins cut your liver. You no can go. Business good. Damascus no good. Ver' col' in Damascus now."

It cost me a day's earnings one afternoon among the tavern keepers to revive his flagging memory before he recalled that there *was* a road

to Damascus, and that caravans had been known to pass over it; but even in such good spirits he persisted with great vehemence that the journey could not be made on foot.

The bumboat-man left me next morning at the outskirts of the city and a bend in the road soon hid him from view. For an hour the highway was perfectly level, flanked by rich gardens and orange groves, and thronged with dusky, supple-limbed men and women garbed in flowing sheets. Soon all this changed. The road wound upward, the delicate orange tree gave place to the sturdy olive, the fertile gardens to haggard hillsides, the gay throng to an occasional Arab, grim and austere of visage, leading or riding a swaying camel. Over the dull solitude fell a silence broken only by the rising wind sighing mournfully through the jagged gullies and stocky trees. The summer breeze of the sea level turned chilly and I found it worth while to seek the sunny side of a boulder before broaching the lunch in my knapsack. Nearer the summit of the first range the aspect was less dreary. The cedar forests began and broke the monotony of the ragged landscape. Here and there a group of peasants was grubbing on the wayside slopes. To the north or south a flat-roofed village clung to a mountain flank.

How strange and foreign seemed everything about me! The implements of the peasants, the food in my knapsack, the very tobacco in my pipe, every detail of custom and costume seemed but to widen the vast gulf between this and my accustomed world. If I addressed a fellow-wayfarer, he answered back an incomprehensible jumble of words, wound the folds of his unfamiliar garments about him, and hurried on. If I caught sight of a village clock, its hands pointed to six when the hour was midday. Even the familiar name of the famous city to which I was bound was meaningless to the natives, for they called it " Shaam."

My pronunciation of the word was at fault, no doubt, for though I stood long at a fork in the route in the early afternoon shouting " Shaam " at each passer-by, I took the wrong branch. Some hours I had tramped along a rapidly deteriorating highway before a suspicion of this mistake assailed me. Even then, with no means to verify it, I kept on. At last the route emerged from a cutting, and the shimmering sea almost at my feet showed that I was marching due southward. Two peasants appeared above a rise of ground beyond. As they drew near, I pointed off down the road and shouted " Shaam? " The pair halted, wonderingly, in the center of the highway some dis-

tance from me. "Shaam! Shaam! Shaam!" I repeated, striving to give the word an accentuation that would suggest the interrogation point that went with it. The peasants stared open-mouthed, drew back several paces, and peered down the road and back at me a dozen times, as if undecided whether I was calling their attention to some phenomenon of nature or attempting to distract their attention long enough to pick their pockets. Then a slow, half-hearted smile broke out on the features of the quicker witted. He stood first on one leg, then on the other, squinted along the highway once more, and began to repeat after me, "Shaam! Shaam! Shaam."

"Aywa, Shaam!" I cried.

He turned to his companion. The parley that ensued was long enough to have settled all differences of opinion in politics, religion, and the rotation of crops. Then both began to shake their heads so vigorously that the muscles of their necks stood out like steel hawsers. Two broad grins that were meant to be reassuring distorted their leathery visages. They stretched out their arms to the southward and burst forth in unharmonious duet: "La! la! la! la! la! Shaam! la! la! la! la! la!" The Arab says "la" when he means "no." I turned about and hurried back the way I had come.

Dusk was falling when I traversed for the second time a two-row village facing the highway. As I expected, there was not a building in any way resembling an inn. For the Arab, even of the twentieth century, considers it a sin that "the stranger within his gates" shall be obliged to put up at a public house. I had already seen enough of the Syrian, however, to know the chief weakness of his character — insatiable curiosity. One thing he cannot do is mind his own business. Is there a trade going on, a debt being paid, a quarrel raging? The vociferations of bargaining, the jingle of money, the angry shrieks drive from his head every thought of his own affairs, and he hastens to join the increasing throng around the parties interested, to offer his advice and bellow his criticisms. I sat down on a boulder at the end of the village.

In three minutes a small crowd had collected. In ten, half the population was swarming around me and roaring at my vain attempt to address them, as at some entertainment specially arranged for their enjoyment. A good half-hour of incessant chattering ensued before one of the band motioned to me to follow him, and turned back into the village. The multitude surged closely around me, examining minutely every article of my apparel that was visible, grinning, smirk-

ing, running from one side to the other, lest they lose some point in the make-up of so strange a creature, and babbling the while like an army of apes.

The leader turned off the highway towards the largest building in the village. Ten yards from the door he halted, the multitude formed a semicircle, leaving me in the center like the chief buffoon in a comic opera ensemble, and one and all began to bellow at the top of his lungs. A girl of some sixteen years appeared on the threshold. "Taala hena!" (come here) roared the chorus. The girl ran down the steps. A roar as of an angry sea burst forth as every member of the company stretched out an arm towards me. Plainly, each was determined that he, and not his neighbor, should have the distinction of introducing this novel being.

"Sprechen Sie Deutsch?" shrieked the girl in my ear.

"Ja wohl," I answered.

The rabble fell utterly silent at the first word, and I asked to be directed to an inn.

"There is no hotel in our city of Bhamdoon," replied the girl, with flashing eyes; "We should be insulted. In this house, with my family, lives a German missionary lady. You must stop here."

She led the way to the door. The missionary met me on the steps with a cry of delight, which she hastened to excuse on the ground that she had not seen a European in many months.

"What would supper and lodging cost me here?" I demanded. The habit of making such an inquiry had become almost an instinct among the grasping innkeepers of Europe. Luckily, the German lady was hard of hearing. The girl gave me a quick glance, half scornful, half astonished, which reminded me that such a question is an insult in the land of the Arabs.

"The lady is busy, now," said the girl, "come and visit my family."

She led the way along a hall and threw open a door. I pulled off my cap.

"Keep it on," said my guide, "and leave your shoes there."

She stepped out of her own loose slippers and into the room. It was square and low, the stone floor half covered with mats and cushions; in the center glowed a small, sheet-iron stove, and around three of the walls ran a divan. Two men, two women, and several children were seated in a semicircle on the floor, their legs folded in front of them. They rose without a word as I entered. The girl placed a cushion for me on the floor. The family sat down again, carefully and

leisurely adjusted their legs, and then one and all, in regular succession, according to age, cried "lailtak saeedee" (good evening).

In the center of the group sat three large bowls, one of lentils and another of chopped-up potatoes in oil. The third contained a delicacy made of sour milk — a cross between a soup and a pudding, that is a great favorite among the Arabs. On the floor, beside each member of the family, lay several sheets of bread, half a yard in diameter and as thin as cardboard, each heap bearing a close resemblance to the famous "stack of wheats" of our own land. The head of the house pushed the bowls toward me, ordered a stack of bread to be placed beside my cushion, and motioned to me to eat. I stared helplessly at the bowls, for there was neither knife, fork, nor spoon in sight. The girl, however, knowing the ways of faranchees from years in a mission-school in Beirut, explained my perplexity to her father. He cast upon me such a look as an American society leader might bestow upon an Australian Bushman at her table, begged my pardon, through his daughter, for overriding the dictates of etiquette by partaking of a morsel before his guest had begun, tore a few inches from a bread-sheet, and folding it between his fingers, picked up a pinch of lentils and ate. I lost no time in falling to.

A wonderful invention is this *gkebis* or Arab bread. If one purchases food in a native bazaar, it is wrapped in a bread-sheet — and a very serviceable wrapper it is, for it requires a good grip and a fair pair of biceps to tear it. A bread-sheet takes the place of many table utensils: arab matrons, 'tis said, never complain of their dish-washing tasks. It makes a splendid cover for pots and pans, it does well as a waiter's tray. Never have I seen it used to cover roofs, nor as shaving paper — but the Oriental is noted for his inability to make the most of his opportunities. In its primary mission — as an article of food — however, gkebis is not an unqualified success. In taste it is not always unsavory, but ten minutes chewing makes far less impression on it than on a rubber mat. It is rumored, too, that more than one Frank has lost his appetite in striving to pronounce its guttural Arabic name. Very often — as on this occasion — when weeks have passed since its baking, the gkebis grows brittle and is inclined to break when used as a spoon. My host picked up one of my sheets, held it against the glowing stove with the flat of his hand, and returned it. It was as pliable as cloth and much more toothsome than before.

The younger man rolled cigarettes for the three of us. We

had settled back to chat — through interpreter — when there came a tap at the door and a few words in Arabic that caused the family to jump hurriedly to their feet. An awe-struck whisper passed from mouth to mouth; "sheik! sheik!" The children were whisked into one corner, the door flung open, and there entered a diminutive man of about sixty. Long, flowing robes enveloped his form, a turban-wound fez perched almost jauntily on his head, and his feet were bare, for he had dropped his slippers at the door. His face, above all, attracted attention. Deep-wrinkled, with a long scar across one cheek, a visage browned and weather-beaten by the wild storms that sometimes rage over the Lebanon, there was about it an expression of frankness; yet from his eyes there flashed shrewd, worldly-wise glances that stamped him as a man vastly different from his simple fellow-townsmen.

The sheik greeted the head of the family, took a seat near me on the divan, salaamed solemnly to each person present, acknowledged the greetings they returned, and with a wave of his hand bade them be seated. The newcomer had, quite plainly, been attracted to the house by the rumor that a faranchee was visiting the family. After a few preliminary remarks, the drift of which I could follow from his expressive gestures and the few words I had picked up, he turned the conversation, with the ease of a diplomat, to the subject of their strange guest. My hosts needed no urging. For a time the sheik listened to their explanations and suppositions with an unruffled mien, puffing the while at a cigarette with as blasé an air as if faranchees were the most ordinary beings to him.

As a climax to his tale the head of the house remarked that I was bound to "Shaam" on foot. The ending was fully as effective as he could have hoped. The sheik fairly bounded into the air, threw his cigarette at the open stove, and burst forth into an excited tirade. The girl interpreted. It was the old story of "impossible," "can't be done," and the rest; but a new element was introduced into a threadbare prediction; for the sheik declared that, as village magistrate, he would not permit me to continue in such a foolhardy undertaking. How many weapons did I carry? None? What? No weapon? Travel to far-off Damascus without being armed? Why, his own villagers never ventured along the highway to the nearest towns without their guns! He would not hear of it; and he was still disclaiming as only an excited Oriental can, when the missionary came to invite me to a second supper.

I took leave of my host early next morning, swung my knapsack over my shoulder, and limped down to the road. But Bhamdoon was not yet done with me. In the center of the highway, in front of the little shop of which he was proprietor, stood the sheik and several fellow townsmen. With great politeness, he invited me to step inside. My feet were still swollen and blistered from the long tramp of the day before, for the cloth slippers of Port Saïd offered no more protection from the sharp stones of the highway than a sheet of paper, and I accepted the invitation. The village head placed a stool for me in the front of the shop, in full sight from up or down the route. It soon became evident that I was on exhibition as a freak of humanity, for the sheik pointed me out with great delight to every passer-by. Apparently, too, he had chosen this opportune moment to collect some village tax. On the floor beside me stood an earthenware pot, and the sheik, as soon as his exhibit had been viewed from all sides, called upon each newcomer to drop into it a bishleek (ten cents). Like true Orientals, they gave smaller pieces, some half bishleeks, some one or two metleeks; but not a man passed without contributing his mite, for the command of the sheik of a Syrian village is law to all its inhabitants.

Some time I had served as a bait for tax-dodgers when a villager I had not yet seen put in an appearance, and addressed me in fluent English. He had gathered a Syrian fortune in Maine and returned, years before, to the rugged slopes of his native Lebanon. He insisted that I visit his house nearby and, once there, fell to tucking bread-sheets, black olives, raisins, and pieces of sugar-cane into my knapsack, shouting incessantly at the same time of his undying affection for America and things American. Out of mere pride for his bleak country, he took care, on the way back to the shop, to point out a narrow path that wound up the steep slope of a neighboring range.

"That," he said, "leads to the Damascus road. But no man can journey to Damascus on foot."

The earthenware pot was almost full when I took my seat again on the stool. I turned to my new acquaintance.

"What special taxes is the sheik gathering this morning?" I demanded.

"Eh! What?" cried the erstwhile New Englander, following the indication of my finger, "The pot? Why, don't you know what that 's for?"

"No," I answered.

"Why, that is a collection the sheik is taking up to buy you a ticket to Damascus on the railroad."

I picked up my knapsack from the floor and stepped into the highway. The sheik and several bystanders threw themselves upon me with cries of dismay. It was no use attempting to escape from a dozen horny hands. I permitted myself to be led back to the stool and sat down with the knapsack across my knees. The sheik addressed me in soothing tones, pointing at the pot with every third word. The others resumed their seats on the floor, rolled new cigarettes, and fell quiet once more. With one leap I sprang from the stool into the street and set off at top speed down the highway, a screaming, howling, ever-increasing but ever more distant throng at my heels. A half-hour later I gained the summit of the neighboring range and slid down the opposite slope onto the highway to Damascus.

For miles the road ascended sharply, elbowing its way through narrow gorges, or crawling along the face of a mountain where its edge was a yawning precipice. The giant cedars of the first slopes had given way to clumps of stunted dwarfs, cowering in deep-cut ravines behind protecting shoulders of the range. Few were the villages, and being low and flat and built of the same calcareous rock as the mountains, they escaped the eye until one was almost upon them. In every hamlet one or more of the householders marched back and forth on the top of his dwelling, dragging after him a great stone roller and chanting a mournful dirge that seemed to cheer him on in his labor. At first sight these flat roofs seem to be of heavy blocks of stone. In reality they are made of branches and bushes, plastered over with mud, and, were the rolling neglected for a fortnight in this rainy season, they would soon sag and fall in of their own weight. More frequent than the villages were the ruins of a more pretentious generation, standing bleak and drear on commanding hillsides and adding to the haggard desolation. At long intervals appeared a line of camels, plodding westward with a tread of formal dignity, a company of villagers on horseback, or a straggling band of evil-eyed Bedouins astride lean asses. Never a human being alone, never a man on foot, and never a traveler without a long gun slung across his shoulders. The villagers stared at me open-mouthed, the camel drivers leered sarcastically, the scowling Bedouins halted to watch my retreating form as if undecided whether I was worth the robbing.

The snow, which, seen from Beirut, seemed to cover the entire summit of the range in impenetrable drifts, lay in isolated patches along the way. Here was no such Arctic realm as Abdul had pictured. The air was crisp at noonday; by night, no doubt, it would have been bitter cold — mere autumn weather to us of northern clime. But it was easy to understand why those accustomed to the perpetual summer of the coast had fancied the passage an unprecedented hardship.

At the summit, the snow lay deeper. Far below stretched a rectangular tableland, a fertile plain dotted with clusters of dwellings, and shut in on every side by mountain ranges. Across it, like a white ribbon, lay the Damascus highway, growing smaller and smaller, to be lost in tortuous windings in the foothills beyond.

I reached the plain by evening and halted in a hamlet not far from the city of Zakleh. Among the heavy-handed peasants who surrounded me was one who had labored long enough in Italy to have picked up a smattering of her language. We of the West might well take lessons in hospitality from the Arab. Imagine a Syrian arriving at night and on foot in, let us say, a village of rural Kansas; a Syrian in native costume who, in answer to the questions put to him could do no more than point to the road across the prairie and gurgle some such word as "Chikak! Cheekako!" each time with a different accent. An Arabic-speaking villager, arriving on the scene, would, possibly, pause to inquire the stranger's wants. He might direct him to an inn, but he would not consider it his duty to put himself to the annoyance of seeing that he found it. Such was not the Italian-speaking Arab's notion of the proper treatment of strangers. He took personal charge of me at once, led the way to the caravanserai, acted as interpreter, quarreled with the proprietor when he tried to overcharge me, and to save me a dismal evening surrounded by a jabbering multitude, remained until late at night.

I took leave of him at the door of a stone stable — the only lodging which the hamlet offered. The few camel drivers already gathered there were well supplied with bags and blankets which they made no offer to share with me. When I had watched them chasing through the mysteries and hiding-places of their manifold garments the nimble creatures with which they were infected, I lay down on the cobblestone floor without a sigh of regret. Long before morning, however, I should gladly have accepted the most flea-bitten covering. The kodak that served me as a pillow rattled hour after hour with my shiv-

ering. I shivered until my neck and arms ached with the exertion of vainly trying to hold myself still, and never before had I realized the astonishing length of a December night.

I put off with the first suspicion of dawn and was already halfway across the plain when the sun climbed the mountain rampart to the eastward. To the natives the morning was bitter cold. Bands of laborers on their way to the fields grinned at me sympathetically and passed their hands over the scarfs wound round and round their necks and heads. They were certain that, with face and ears unprotected, I was suffering acutely; yet each and all of them, in low slippers, was bare of leg halfway to the knee.

Where the plain ended the highway wound upward through a narrow, rocky defile. Marauding Bedouins could not have chosen a better spot to lie in wait for their victims. I started in alarm when a shout rang out at the summit of the pass. The summons came from no highwayman, however. Before a ruined hut on the hill above, stood a man in khaki uniform, the reins of a saddle horse that grazed at his feet over one arm. "Teskereh!" he bawled. I climbed the hillside and handed over my Turkish passport. The officer grew friendly at once, tethered his horse, and invited me into the hut. Its only furnishings were a mat-covered bench that served the guardian as a bed, and a pan of coals. I drew out a few coins and ate an imaginary breakfast. The officer could not — or would not — understand my pantomime. He motioned me to a seat, offered a cigarette, and poured out a cup of muddy coffee from a pot over the coals. But food he would not bring forth.

While we sat grinning speechlessly at each other, the tinkle of a bell sounded up the pass. The officer sprang to his feet and hurried down the hill. Not once before had I been called upon to produce the teskereh which the American consul had assured me was indispensable, and a suspicion that one-half the amount it had cost would have sufficed to blind the officers of the Porte to its absence grew to conviction at this Thermopylæ of the Lebanon. A war of words sounded from the highway. I stepped to the door. The soldier and the driver of an overburdened ass were screaming at each other in the center of the route. When the quarrel had reached its height, the traveler dropped something into the guardsman's hand and continued on his way. The officer climbed the hill, smiling broadly, "Teskereh, ma feesh!" he cried, "Etnane bishleek!" (he had no teskereh! Two bishleeks); and he dropped the coins with a rattle into a

The lonely, Bedouin-infected road over the Lebanon. "Few corners of the globe offer more utter solitude than Syria and Palestine"

The Palestine beast of burden loaded with stone

stocking-like purse that was by no means empty. I drew him out of the hut and, once in the sunshine, opened my kodak. He gave one wild shriek and stumbled over himself in his haste to regain the hovel; nor could any amount of wheedling induce him to venture forth again until I had closed the apparatus. Accepting a bribe was a mere matter of business; to have his picture taken was a sure way to future perdition.

Beyond the pass stretched mile after mile of desolation absolute, hills upon hills sank down behind each other, barren and drear, except for an occasional olive tree, a sturdy form of vegetation that, in itself, added to the general loneliness. Few corners of the globe can equal in fearful stretches of utter solitude this land so aptly termed, in Biblical phraseology, "the waste places of the earth." All through the day I tramped on, with never a sight nor sound of an animate object, save once in mid-afternoon, when I broke my fast on bread-sheets and cakes of ground sugar-cane at an isolated shop. Darkness fell over the same haggard wilderness. The wind, howling across the solitary waste, filled my ears. On this blackest of nights I could not have made out a ghost a yard away, and the unknown highway led me into many a pitfall. Long hours after sunset I was plodding blindly on, my cloth slippers making not a sound, when I ran squarely into the arms of some species of human whose native footwear had rendered his approach as noiseless as my own. Three startled male voices rang out in guttural shrieks of "Allah"— Arabic invocations, evidently, against evil spirits — as the trio sprang back in terror.

Before I could pass on, one of them — plainly a materialist — struck a match. The howling wind blew it out instantly, but in that brief flicker I caught sight of three ugly faces under a headdress that belongs to the roving Bedouin. With a simultaneous scream of "Faranchee!" the nomads flung themselves upon the particular corner of the darkness where the match had shown me standing. The motive of their attack, perhaps, was Oriental hospitality. In the excitement of the moment I credited them with a desire to increase their capital in the kingdom of black-eyed houris, and evacuated the spot by a bit of side stepping that would have won me fame in the roped arena. In my haste to execute the manœuvre, however, I fell off the highway, and the rattling of stones under my feet precipitated another charge. A dozen times during the ensuing game of hide-and-seek I felt the breath of one of the flea-bitten rascals in my face. The Arabic rules of the game, fortunately, required the players to keep up a continual

howling for mutual encouragement, while I moved silently, after the fashion of the West. Aided by this unfair advantage, I eluded their welcoming embraces until they stopped for a consultation, and, creeping noiselessly on hands and knees, I lay hold on the highway and sped silently away, by no means certain whether I was headed towards Damascus or the coast.

An hour later the howling of dogs heralded my approach to some hamlet. Once in it, I halted to listen for sounds of human life. Its inhabitants, apparently, were lost in slumber, for what Syrian could be awake and silent? The lights that shone from every hovel proved nothing, for the Arab nations are unaccountably fearful of the evil spirits that lurk in the darkness. I beat off the snapping curs and started on again. Suddenly muffled peals of laughter and the excited voices of male and female sounded from the depths of a building before me. I hurried towards it and knocked loudly on the iron-studded door. The festivities ceased as suddenly as if I had touched an electric button controlling them. For several moments the silence was absolute. Then there came the slapping of slippered feet along the passageway inside, and a woman's voice called out to me. I summoned up my limited Arabic: "M'abarafshee arabee! Faranchee! Fee wahed locanda? Bnam!" (I don't speak Arabic! Foreigner! Is there an inn? Sleep!). Without a word the unknown lady slapped back along the corridor. A good five minutes elapsed. I knocked once more and again there came the patter of feet. This time a man's gruff voice greeted me. I repeated my Arabic vocabulary. There sounded the sliding of innumerable bolts and bars, the massive door opened ever so slightly, and the muzzle of a matchlock was thrust out into my face.

The eyes that appeared above it were evidently satisfied with their inspection. The door was thrown wide open, and a very Hercules of a native, with a mustache that would have put the Kaiser to shame, stepped out, holding his clumsy gun ready for instant use. I could not but laugh at his frightened aspect. He smiled sheepishly and, retreating into the house, returned in a moment unarmed, and carrying a lamp and a rush mat. At one end of the building he pushed open a door that hung by one hinge and lighted me into a room with earth floor and one window, from which five of the six panes were missing. A heap of dried branches at one end stamped it as a wood shed.

A gaunt cur wandered in at our heels. The native drove him off, spread the mat on the ground and brought from the house a pan of

live coals. I called for food. When he returned with several bread-sheets, I drew out my handkerchief and began to untie it. My host shook his head fiercely, made the sign of the cross and pointed several times at the ceiling, implying, evidently, that he was a convert of the Catholic missionaries and that the Allah of the Christians would pay my bill.

Barely had the native disappeared when the dog poked his ugly head through the half-open door and snarled viciously at me. He was a wolfish animal of the yellow mongrel variety so common in Syria, and in his eye gleamed a rascality that gave him a startling resemblance to the thieving nomads that infect that drear land. I drove him off and made the door fast, built a roaring fire of twigs, and rolling up in the mat, lay down beside the blaze. I awoke from a half-conscious nap to find that irrepressible cur sniffing at me and displaying his ugly fangs within six inches of my face. A dozen times I fastened the door against him in vain. Had he merely bayed the moon all night it would have mattered little, for with a fire to tend I had small chance to sleep; but his silent skulking and muffled snarls kept me wide-eyed with apprehension until the grey of dawn peeped in at the ragged window.

The village was named Hemeh — a station of the railway from the coast not far beyond told me as much. The dreary ranges of the day before fell quickly away. The highway descended a narrow, fertile valley in close company with a small river, on the banks of which grew willows and poplars in profusion.

A bright morning sun soon made the air grateful, though the chill of night and the mountains still hovered in the shadows. Travelers became frequent; peasant families driving their asses homeward from the morning market, bands of merchants on horseback, well-to-do natives in a garb that recalled the ill-omened coat of Joseph. Here passed a camel caravan whose drivers would, perhaps, purchase just such a slave of his brothers this very day. There squatted a band of Bedouins at breakfast and their eating was as ceremonial as any meal among the ancient Jews. Beyond rode a full-bearded sheik who was surely as much a patriarch in appearance as Abraham of old.

The road continued its descent, the passing throng became almost a procession, and I swung at last round a mountain spur that had hidden from view an unequaled sight. Two miles away, across a vast, level plain, traversed by the sparkling river, and peopled by a battalion of soldiers in manœuvre, the white city of Damascus stood out against

a background of dull-red hills, the morning sun gleaming on graceful domes and minarets of superb Saracenic architecture. It was an ultra-Oriental panorama before which that first quatrain of Omar sprang unbidden to the lips. I passed on with the throng and was soon swallowed up in the multitude that surged through "the Street called Straight"— which is n't.

CHAPTER VII

THE CITIES OF OLD

MORE successfully than all other cities of its age and fame, Damascus has repulsed the advance of Western civilization and invention. To be sure, the whistle of the locomotive is heard now in her suburbs; for besides the railway to the coast, a new line brings to the ancient city the produce of the vast and fertile Hauran beyond Jordan. A few single telegraph wires, too, connect "Shaam" with the outside world, and the whir of the American sewing machine is heard in her long, vaulted bazaars. But these things make the prehistoric way of the city the stranger by comparison, and serve to remind the traveler that he is not on another sphere, but merely far removed from the progressive and prosaic West.

Here is a man, with a hammer that might have existed in the stone age, beating into shape a vessel of brass on a flat rock. There a father and son are turning a log into wooden clogs with a primitive bucksaw, the man standing on the log, the boy kneeling on the ground beneath. Beyond them is a turning lathe such as the workmen of Solomon may have used in the building of his temple. The operator squats on the floor of his open booth, facing the street — for no Damascan can carry on his business with his back turned to the sights and sounds of the everchanging multitude. With one hand he draws back and forth a sort of Indian bow, the cord wound once round the stick, which, whirling almost as rapidly as in a steam lathe, is fashioned into the desired shape by a chisel held with the left hand and the bare toes of the artisan. Mile after mile through the endless rows of bazaars such prehistoric trades are plied. Not a foot of space on either side of the narrow streets is unoccupied. Where the overdressed owners of great heaps of silks and rugs have left a pigeonhole between their booths, sits the ragged vendor of sweetmeats and half-inch slices of cocoanut. The Damascan does not set up his business as far as possible from his competitors. In one quarter are crowded a hundred manufacturers of the red fez of Islam. In another a colony of brass workers make a deafening din. Beyond, sounds

the squeak of innumerable saws where huge logs are slowly turned into lumber by hand power. The shopper in quest of a pair of slippers may wander from daylight to dusk among booths overflowing with every other imaginable ware, to come at last, when he is ready to purchase the first thing bearing the remotest resemblance to footwear, into a section where slippers of every size, shape, and quality are displayed in such superabundance as to make him forget from very bewilderment what he came for.

To endeavor to make headway against the surging multitude is much like attempting to swim up the gorge of Niagara. Long lines of camels splash through the human stream, utterly indifferent to the urchins under their feet. Donkeys all but hidden under enormous bundles of fagots that scrape the buildings on either side, asses bestraddled by foul-mouthed boys who guide the beasts by kicking them behind either ear and urge them on by a sound peculiar to the Arab — a disgusting trilling of the soft palate — dash with set teeth out of obscure and unexpected side streets. Not an inch do they swerve from their course, not once do they slacken their pace. The faranchee who expects them to do so is sure to receive many a jolt in the ribs from asinine shoulders or some unwieldy cargo and to be sent sprawling, if there is room to sprawl, as the beast and his driver glance back at his discomfiture with a diabolical gleam in their eyes. Hairless, scabby mongrel curs, yellow or grey in color, prowl among the legs of the throng, skulk through the byways devouring the refuse, or lie undisturbed in the puddles that abound in every street. The donkey may knock down a dozen pedestrians an hour, but he takes good care to step over the pariah dogs in his path. Periodically the mongrels gather in bands at busy corners, yelping and snarling, snapping their yellow fangs, and raising an infernal din that impedes bargainings a hundred yards away. If a bystander wades among them with his stick and drives them off, it is only to have them collect again five minutes after the last yelp has been silenced.

Where in the Western world does the pursuit of dollars raise such a hubbub as the scramble for metleeks in the streets of Damascus? A dollar, after all, is a dollar and under certain conditions worth shouting for; but a metleek is only a cent and the incessant calling after it, like a multitude searching the wilderness for a lost child, sounds penurious. "Metleek!" cries the seller of flat loaves, on the ground at your feet. "Metleek!" roars the gruff-voiced nut vendor, fighting his way through the rabble, basket on arm. "Metleek!" screams

Damascus. "The street called Straight—which is n't"

A wood-turner of Damascus. He watches the ever-passing throng, turning the stick with a bow and a loose string, and holding the chisel with his toes

the wandering bartender, jingling his brass disks. Unendingly the word echoes through the recesses and windings of the bazaars; commandingly from the hawker whose novelty has attracted the ever-susceptible multitude, threateningly from the sturdy fellow whose stand has been deserted, pleadingly from the crippled beggar who threads his way miraculously through the human whirlpool. A great, discordant symphony of "Metleek!" rises over the land, wherein are blended even the voices of the pasha in his palace, the mullah in his mosque, and His Impuissant Majesty in far-off "Stamboul." Lives there a man in all the realm who would accept a larger coin even under compulsion?

One figure stands out as the most miserable in all the teeming life of Damascus — the Turkish soldier. The burden of conscription falls only on the Mohammedan, for none but the followers of the prophet of Medina may be enrolled under the Sick Man's banners. The recruit receives a uniform of the shoddiest material once a year, and an allowance of about two cents a day. What the allowance will not cover, he pays for out of his meager rations. His tobacco, his amusements, the very patches on his miserable uniform, he reckons in terms of the flabby biscuits that are served out to him. Every morning there sallies forth from the tumble-down barracks an unkempt private, hopeless weariness of the petty things of life stamped on his coarse features, his garb a crazy quilt of awkward patches, who, holding before him a sack of soggy gkebis contributed by his fellow-conscripts, wanders through the market places, adding his long-drawn wail to the chorus of "Metleek." Individually, he is a gaunt scarecrow; on parade he bears far more resemblance to a band of Bowery bootblacks than to a military company. In outward forms he is as devoutly religious as his taskmaster at Stamboul, or the bejewelled merchant who picks his way with effeminate tread through the reeking streets to his mosque. Five times each day he halts for his prayers wherever the voice of the muezzin finds him. Not even his racial dread of water deters him from performing the ablutions required by the Koran. In spite of his poverty he finds means to stain his nails with henna, and to tattoo the knuckles or the backs of his hands with grotesque figures that assist materially, no doubt, in the ultimate salvation of his soul; and he snarls angrily at the dog of an unbeliever who would transfix his image on photographic paper.

On the Sunday afternoon of my arrival in Damascus a surging multitude swept me through the entrance to the parade ground opposite the

barracks. A sea of up-turned faces surrounded a ragged band that was perpetrating a concert of German and Italian airs. For a time I hung on the tail of the crowd. When endurance failed, I withdrew to the only seat in evidence — a stone pile in a far corner — to change the film in my kodak. Almost before I had begun, a steady flow of humanity set in towards me. In a twinkling I was the center of a jostling throng of Damascans, each one screaming and pushing for a view of the strange machine; and the players struggled on despairingly with only themselves as audience. Distressed at having unintentionally set up a counter attraction, I closed the apparatus and turned away. The move but aggravated the difficulty. For a moment the Damascans gazed hesitatingly from the deserted band stand to my retreating figure, swelled with curiosity, and surged pell-mell after me. My reputation as a self-sacrificing member of society was at stake. Bravely I turned and marched back to the struggling musicians — the adjective, at least, is used advisedly — and held the kodak in plain sight. An unprecedented audience of music-lovers quickly gathered and for a time the concert moved with great gusto. But the players were merely human, and only Arabian humans at that. One by one they caught sight of the "queer machine" below them. The technique faltered; the trombones lost the key — or found it, which was quite as disconcerting; the fifers paused; the cornetists lost their pucker; the leader turned to stare, open-mouthed as the rest, and an air that had suggested, here and there, the triumphal march from Aïda died a lingering, agonizing death.

This, surely, was the psychological moment for a photograph! I opened the kodak. A hoarse murmur rose from the multitude. At last they recognized the nefarious instrument! I pointed it at the leader. He screamed like a pin-pricked infant, a man beside me snatched at the kodak, another thumped me viciously in the ribs, a third tore at my hair, and the frenzied population of Damascus swept down upon me, bent on wreaking summary vengeance on a defiler of their religious superstitions. I left them entangled in their own legs and darted under the band stand towards the gate. A guard bellowed at me. I squirmed through his arms and sped far away through the half-deserted streets of the music-loving metropolis.

Darkness was falling when I caught breath in some unknown corner of the city. Long lines of merchants were setting up the board-shutters before their booths. Hardly a straggler remained of the maudlin, daytime multitude. Dismally I wandered through the laby-

rinth so animate at noonday, shut in on either side by endless, high board fences. It mattered not in what European language I inquired for an inn from belated citizens; each one muttered "m'abarafshee," and hurried on. I sat down before a lighted tobacco booth and feigned sleep. The proprietor came out to drive off the curs sniffing at my feet and led the way to a neighboring *khan,* in which the keeper spread me a bed of blankets on the cobble-stone floor.

I ventured next day into the "Hotel Stamboul," a proud hostelry facing the stable that serves Damascus as post office, with little hope either of making known my wants or of finding the rate within my means. The proprietor, strange to say, mutilated a little French and, stranger still, assigned me to a room at eight cents a day. The cost of living was thereby reduced to a mere nothing. The Arab has a great abhorrence of eating his fill at definite hours and prefers to nibble, nibble all day long as if in constant fear of losing the use of his jaws by a moment's inactivity. Countless shops in Damascus cater to this nibbling trade. For a copper or two they serve a well-filled dish of fruit, nuts, sweetmeats, pastry, puddings, ragoût, syrups, or a variety of indigenous products and messes which no Westerner could identify. They are savory portions, too, for the Arab cook, however much he may differ in methods from the Occidental chef, knows his profession. Like the street hawker who sells a quart of raisins for a cent — the Mohammedan makes no wine — his prices seem scarcely worth the collecting; and be his customer Frank or Mussulman, they never vary. In the seaports of the Orient the whiteman must expect to be "done." The ignorance and asininity of generations of tourists have turned seaside merchants into commercial vultures. In untutored Damascus not a shopkeeper attempted to cheat me out of the fraction of a copper.

Four days I had passed in Damascus before I turned to the problem of how to get out of it. I had planned to strike southwestward through the country to Nazareth. On the map the trip seemed easy. The journey from the coast had proved, however, that the sketches of the gazeteer were little to be trusted in this mysterious country. The highway from the coast, moreover, is one of the few roads in all the land between Smyrna and the Red Sea. Across the Bedouin-infected wilderness between Damascus and Nazareth lay only a vaguely marked route, traversed in springtime by a great concourse of pilgrims. In this late December the rainy season was at hand. Several violent downpours, that would have convinced the most skeptical of the literal

truth of the Biblical account of the deluge, had already burst over Damascus, storms that were sure to have reduced Palestine to a soggy marsh and turned its summer brooks into roaring torrents.

The passage, however, could not have been more difficult than the gathering of information concerning it. The dwellers in the cities of Asia Minor are the most incorrigible stay-at-homes on the globe. Travel for pleasure or instruction they have never dreamed of. Only the direst necessity can draw them forth from their accustomed haunts, and they know no more of the territory a few miles outside their walls than of the antipodes. It cost me a half-day's search to find the American consulate, a shame-faced hovel decorated with a battered shield of the size and picturesqueness of a peddler's license. The consul himself opened the door and my hopes fell — for he was a native. A real American would have seen my point of view and given me all the information in his power. This suave and lady-like mortal dealt out cigarettes with a lavish hand and delved into the details of my existence back to the fourth generation; but directions he would not give, on the ground that when I had been stolen by Bedouins or washed away by the rain my ghost would rise up in the hours of darkness to denounce him. His last reason, especially, was forceful. "If you attempt to go to Nazareth on foot," he cried, "you will get tired."

Towards evening I ran to earth in the huddled bazaars a French-speaking tailor who claimed to have made the first few miles of the journey. Gleefully I jotted down his explicit directions. An hour's walk, next morning, brought me out on a wind-swept stretch of greyish sand beyond the city. For some miles a vague path led across the monotonous waste. Pariah dogs growled and snarled over the putrid carcasses of horses and sheep that lined the way. The wind whirled aloft tiny particles of sand that bit my cheeks and filled my eyes. A chilling rain began to fall, sinking quickly into the desert. At the height of the storm the path ceased at the brink of a muddy torrent that it would have been madness to have attempted to cross. A solitary shepherd plodded along the bank of the stream. I pointed across it and shouted, "Banias? Nazra?" The Arab stared at me a moment, tossed his arms aloft, crying to Allah to note the madness of a roving faranchee, and sped away across the desert.

I plodded back to the city. In the armorers' bazaar a sword-maker called out to me in German and I halted to renew my inquiries. The workman paused in his task of beating a scimitar to venture his

solemn opinion that the tailor was an imbecile and an ass, and assured me that the road to Nazareth left the city in exactly the opposite direction. "'Tis a broad caravan trail," he went on, "opening out beyond the shoemakers' bazaar." A bit more hopeful, I struck off again next morning.

The assertion of Abdul that it was "ver' col'" in Damascus was not without foundation. In the sunshine summer reigned, but in the shadow lurked a chill that penetrated to the bones. On this cloudy morning the air was biting. Before I had passed the last shoemaker's booth a cold drizzle set in. On the desert it turned to a wet snow that clung to bush and boulder like shreds of white clothing. A toe protruded here and there from my dilapidated cloth slippers. The sword-maker, apparently, had indulged in a practical joke at my expense. A caravan track there was beyond the last wretched hovel, a track that showed for miles across the bleak country. But though it might have taken me to Bagdad or the steppes of Siberia, it certainly did not lead to the land of the chosen people.

I turned and trotted back to the city, cheered on by the anticipation of such a fire as roars up the chimneys of American homes on the memorable days of the first snow. The anticipation proved my ignorance of Damascan customs. The proprietor and his guests were shivering over a pan of coals that could not have heated a doll's house. I fought my way into the huddled group and warmed alternately a finger and a toe. But the chill of the desert would not leave me. A servant summoned the landlord to another part of the building. He picked up the "stove" and marched away with it, and I took leave of my quaking fellow-guests and went to bed, as the only possible place to restore my circulation.

Dusk was falling the next afternoon when I stumbled upon the British consulate. Here, at last, was a man. The dull natives with their slipshod mental habits had given me far less information in four days than I gained from a five-minute interview with this alert Englishman. He was none the less certain than they, however, that the overland journey was impossible at that season. Late reports from the Waters of Meron announced the route utterly impassable.

The consul was a director of the Beirut-Damascus line. Railway directors in Asia Minor have, evidently, special privileges. For the Englishman assured me that a note over his signature would take me back to the coast as readily as a ticket. The next day I spent Christmas in a stuffy coach on the cogwheel railway over the Lebanon and

stepped out at Beirut, shortly after dark, to run directly into the arms of Abdul Razac Bundak.

Our "company" was definitely dissolved on the afternoon of December twenty-seventh and I set out for Sidon. Here, at least, I could not lose my way, for I had but to follow the coast. Even Abdul, however, did not know whether the ancient city was one or ten days distant. A highway through an olive grove, where lean Bedouins squatted on their hams, soon broke up into several diverging footpaths. The one I chose led over undulating sand dunes where the misfit shoes that I had picked up in a pawn shop of Beirut soon filled to overflowing. I swung them over a shoulder and plodded on barefooted. A roaring brook blocked the way. I crossed it by climbing a willow on one bank and swinging into the branches of another opposite, and plunged into another wilderness of sand.

Towards dusk I came upon a peasant's cottage on a tiny plain and halted for water. A youth in the Sultan's crazy quilt, sitting on the well curb, brought me a basinful. I had started on again when a voice rang out behind me, "Hé! D'où est-ce que vous venez? Où est-ce que vous allez?" In the doorway of the hovel stood a slatternly woman of some fifty years of age. I mentioned my nationality.

"American?" cried the feminine scarecrow, this time in English, as she rushed out upon me, "My God! You American? Me American, too! My God!"

The assertion seemed scarcely credible, as she was decidedly Syrian, both in dress and features.

"Yes, my God!" she went on, "I live six years in America, me! I go back to America next month! I not see America for one year. Come in house!"

I followed her into the cottage. It was the usual dwelling of the peasant class — dirt floor, a kettle hanging over an open fire in one corner, a few ears of corn and bunches of dried grapes suspended from the ceiling. On one of the rough stone walls, looking strangely out of place amid this Oriental squalor, was pinned a newspaper portrait of McKinley.

"Oh, my God!" cried the woman, as I glanced towards the distortion, "Me Republican, me. One time I see McKinley when I peddle by Cleveland, Ohio. You know Cleveland? My man over there"— she pointed away to the fertile slopes of the Lebanon —"My man go back with me next month, vote one more time for Roosevelt."

The patch-work youth poked his head in at the door.

"Taala hena, Maghmoód," bawled the boisterous Republican. "This American man! He no have to go for soldier fight long time for greasy old Sultan. Not work all day to get bishleek, him! Get ten, fifteen, twenty bishleek day! Bah! You no good, you! Why for you not run away to America?"

The soldier listened to this more or less English with a silly smirk on his face and shifted from one foot to the other with every fourth word. The woman repeated the oration in her native tongue. The youth continued to grin until the words "ashara, gkamsashar, ashreen" turned his smirk to wide-eyed astonishment, and he dropped on his haunches in the dirt, as if his legs had given way under the weight of such untold wealth.

The woman ran a sort of lodging house in an adjoining stone hut and insisted that I spend the night there. Her vociferous affection for Americans would, no doubt, have forced her to cling to my coat-tails had I attempted to escape. Chattering disconnectedly, she prepared a supper of lentils, bread-sheets, olives, and crushed sugar cane, and set out — to the horror of the Mohammedan youth — a bottle of *beet* (native wine). The meal over, she lighted a narghileh, leaned back in a home-made chair, and blew smoke at the ceiling with a far-away look in her eyes.

"Oh, my God!" she cried suddenly, "You sing American song! I like this no-good soldier hear good song. Then he sing Arab song for you."

I essayed the rôle of wandering minstrel with misgiving. At the first lines of "The Swanee River" the conscript burst forth in a roar of laughter that doubled him up in a paroxysm of mirth.

"You damn fool, you," bellowed the female, shaking her fist at the prostrate property of the Sultan. "You no know what song is! American songs wonderful! Shut up! I split your head!"

This gentle hint, rendered into Arabic, convinced the youth of the solemnity of the occasion, and he listened most attentively with set teeth until the Occidental concert was ended.

When his turn came, he struck up a woeful monotone that sounded not unlike the wailing of a lost soul, and sang for nearly an hour in about three notes, shaking his head and rocking his body back and forth in the emotional passages as his voice rose to an ear-splitting yell.

The dirge was interrupted by a shout from the darkness outside. The woman called back in answer, and two ragged, bespattered Bed-

ouins pushed into the hut. The howling and shouting that ensued left me undecided whether murder or merely highway robbery had been committed. The contention, however, subsided after a half-hour of shaking of fists and alternate reduction to the verge of tears, and my hostess took from the wall a huge key and stepped out, followed by the Bedouins.

"You know what for we fight?" she demanded, as she returned alone. "They Arabs. Want to sleep in my hotel. They want pay only four coppers. I say must pay five coppers — one metleek. Bah! This country no good."

Four-fifths of a cent was, perhaps, as great a price as she should have demanded from any lodger in the "hotel" to which she conducted me a half-hour later.

All next day I followed a faintly-marked path that clung closely to the coast, swerving far out on every headland as if fearful of losing itself in the solitude of the moors. Here and there a woe-begone peasant from a village in the hills was toiling in a tiny patch. Across a stump or a gnarled tree trunk, always close at hand, leaned a long, rusty gun, as primitive in appearance as the wooden plow which the tiny oxen dragged back and forth across the fields. Those whose curiosity got the better of them served as illustrations to the Biblical assertion, "No man having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the kingdom of Heaven." For the implement was sure to strike a root or a rock, and the peasant who picked himself up out of the mire could never have been admitted by the least fastidious St. Peter. Nineteen showers flung their waters upon me during the day, showers that were sometimes distinctly separated from each other by periods of sunshine, showers that merged one into another through a dreary drizzle.

A wind from off the Mediterranean put the leaden clouds to flight late in the afternoon and the sun was smiling bravely when the path turned into a well-kept road, winding through a forest of orange trees where countless natives, in a garb that did not seem particularly adapted to such occupation, were stripping the overladen branches of their fruit. Her oranges and her tobacco give livelihood — of a sort — to the ten thousand inhabitants of modern Sidon. From the first shop in the outskirts to the drawbridge of the ruined castle boldly facing the sea, the bazaar was one long, orange-colored streak. The Sidonese who gathered round me in the market would have buried me under their donations of the fruit — windfalls that had split open

Women of Bethlehem going to the Church of the Nativity

The most thickly settled portion of Damascus is the graveyard.
A picture taken at risk of mobbing

— had I not waved them off and followed one of their number, I knew not whither.

He turned in at a gate that gave admittance to a large walled inclosure. From the doors and down the outside stairways of a large building in its center poured a multitude of boys and youths, in drab-colored uniforms, shrieking words of welcome. A young man at the head of the throng reached me first.

"They students," he cried; "I am teacher. This American Mission College. They always run to see white man because they study white man's language and country!"

Every class in the institution, evidently, had been dismissed that they might attend an illustrated lecture on anthropology. The students formed a circle about me, and the "teacher" marched round and round me, discoursing on the various points of my person and dress that differed from the native, as glibly as any medical failure over a cadaver.

"Will you, kind sir," he said, pausing for breath, "will you show to my students the funny things with which the white man holds up his stockings?"

I refused the request, indignantly, of course — the bare thought of such immodesty! Besides, those important articles of my attire had long since been gathered into the bag of a Marseilles rag-picker.

I moved towards the gate.

"Wait, sir," cried the tutor, "very soon the American president of the school comes. He will give you supper and bed."

"I 'll pay my own," I answered.

"What!" shouted the Syrian, "You got metleek? Thees man bring you here because you sit in the market-place like you have no money."

Some time later, as I emerged from an eating shop, a native sprang forward with a wild shout and grasped me by the hand. Grinning with self-complacency at his knowledge of the faranchee mode of greeting, he fell to working my arm like a pump handle, yelping at the same time an unbroken string of Arabic that rapidly brought down upon us every lounger in the market-place. He was dressed in the blanket-like cloak and the flowing headdress of the countryman. His weather-beaten visage, at best reminiscent of a blue-ribbon bulldog, was rendered hideous by a broken nose that had been driven entirely out of its normal position and halfway into his left cheek. Certainly he was no new acquaintance. For some moments I strug-

gled to recall where I had seen that wreck of a face before. From the jumble that fell from his lips I caught a few words: —"locanda, bnam, Beirut." Then I remembered. He of the pump-handle movement had occupied a bed beside my own during my first days in Beirut and had turned the nights into purgatory by wailing a native song in a never-changing monotone, while he rolled and puffed at innumerable cigarettes.

When I had disengaged my aching arm I enquired for an inn. My long-lost roommate nodded his head and led the way to the one large building abutting on the street, a blank wall of sun-baked bricks some forty feet in length, unbroken except for a door through which the Arab pushed me before him. We found ourselves in a vast, gloomy room, its walls the seamy side of the sun-baked bricks, its floor trampled earth, and its flat roof supported by massive beams of such wood as Hiram sent to Solomon for the temple on Mt. Moriah. Save for a bit of space near the door, the room was crowded with camels, donkeys, dogs, and men, and heaps of bundled merchandise. It was the Sidon khan, a station for the caravan trains that make their way up and down the coast. Across the room, above the door, ran a wooden gallery, some ten feet wide. My companion pushed me up the ladder before him, took two blankets — evidently his own property — from a heap in the corner, and, spreading them out in a space unoccupied by prostrate muleteers or camel drivers, invited me to lie down.

The scene below us was a very pandemonium. Donkeys, large and small, lying, standing, kicking, braying, broke away, now and then, to lead their owners a merry chase in and out of the throng. Reclining camels chewed their cud, and gazed at the chaos about them with scornful dignity. Others of these phlegmatic beasts, newly arrived, shrilly protested against kneeling until their cursing masters could relieve them of their loads. Men and dogs were everywhere. Gaunt curs glared about them like famished wolves. Men in coarse cloaks, that resembled grain-sacks split up the front, were cudgeling their beasts, quarreling over the sharing of a blanket, or shrieking at the keeper who collected the khan dues. Among them, less excited mortals squatted, singly or in groups, on blankets spread between a camel and an ass, rolled out the stocking-like rags swinging over their shoulders, and fell to munching their meager suppers. Here and there a man stood barefooted on his cloak, deaf to every sound about

him, salaaming his reverences towards the south wall, beyond which lay Mecca.

Before the first grey of dawn appeared, the mingling sounds that had made an incessant murmur during the night increased to a roar. There came the tinkling of bells on ass and dromedary, the braying and cursing of the denizens of the desert. Men wrestled with unwieldy cargoes, or cudgeled animals reluctant to take up their burdens. At frequent intervals the door beneath our gallery creaked, and one by one the caravans filed out into the breaking day.

The khan was almost empty when I descended the ladder. Late risers were hurrying through their prayers or loading the few animals that remained. The keeper, sitting crosslegged near the door, rolled me a cigarette and demanded a bishleek for my lodging. I knew as well as he that such a price was preposterous, and he was fully aware of my knowledge. He had merely begun the skirmish that is the preliminary of every financial transaction in the East. A little experience with Oriental merchants imbues the faranchee traveler with the spirit of haggling; when he learns, as soon he will, that every tradesman who gets the better of him laughs at him for a fool, self-respect comes to the rescue. For who would not spend a half-hour of sluggish Eastern time to prove that the men of his nation are no inferiors in astuteness to these suave followers of "Maghmoód," however small may be the amount under discussion?

By the time my cigarette was half finished I had reduced the price to four metleeks. Before I tossed it away, the keeper of the khan had accepted a mouth-organ that had somehow found its way into my pack and about three reeds of which responded to the most powerful pair of lungs; and he bade me good-bye with a much more respectful opinion of faranchees than he would have done had I paid the first amount demanded.

The wail of a leather-lunged muezzin echoed across the wilderness as I set off again to the southward. A road that sallied forth from the city stopped short at the edge of an inundated morass and left me to lay my own course, guided by the booming of the Mediterranean. The cheering prospect of a night out of doors lay before me; for, if the map was to be trusted, the next village was fully two days distant. Mile after mile the way led over slippery spurs of the mountain chain and across marshes in which I sank halfway to my knees, with here and there a muddy stream to be forded. Only an occasional

sea gull, circling over the waves, gave life to the dreary landscape. A few isolated patches showed signs of cultivation, but the cold, incessant downpour kept even the hardy peasants cooped up in their villages among the hills to the eastward.

The utter solitude was broken but once by a human being, a ragged muleteer splashing northward as fast as the clinging mud permitted. On his face was the utter dejection of one who had been denied admittance at St. Peter's gate. At sight of me he struggled to increase his pace and, pointing away through the storm, bawled plaintively, "Homar, efendee? Shoof! Fee homar henak?" (Ass, sir? Look! Is there an ass beyond?) When I shook my head he lifted up his voice and wept in true Biblical fashion, and stumbled on across the morass.

The gloomy day was waning when I plunged into a valley of rank vegetation, where several massive stone ruins and a crumbling stone bridge that humped its back over a wandering stream, suggested an ancient center of civilization. I scanned the debris for a hole in which to sleep. Shelter there was none, and a gnawing hunger protested against a halt. From the top of the bridge an unhoped-for sight caught my eye. Miles away, at the end of a low cape that ran far out into the sea, rose a slender minaret, surrounded by a jumble of flat buildings. I tore my way through the undergrowth with hope renewed and struck out towards the unknown, perhaps unpeopled, hamlet.

Dusk turned to utter darkness. For an interminable period I staggered on through the mire, sprawling, now and then, in a stinking slough. The lapping of waves sounded at last, and I struck a solider footing of sloping sand. Far ahead twinkled a few lights, so far out across the water that, had I not seen the village by day, I had fancied them the illuminated portholes of a steamer at anchor. The beach described a half-circle. The twinkling lights drew on before like wills o' the wisp. The flat sand gave way to rocks and boulders — the ruins, apparently, of ancient buildings — against which I barked my shins repeatedly.

I had all but given up in despair the pursuit of the fugitive glowworms, when the baying of dogs fell on my ear. An unveiled corner of the moon disclosed a faintly defined path up the sloping beach, which, leading across the sand-dunes, brought up against a fort-like building, pierced in the center by a gateway. Two flickering

lights under the archway cast weird shadows over a group of Arabs, huddled in their blankets.

The arrival of any traveler at such an hour was an event to bring astonishment; a mud-bespattered faranchee projected thus upon them out of the blackness of the night brought them to their feet with excited cries. I pushed through the group and plunged into a maze of wretched, hovel-choked alleyways. Silence reigned in the bazaars, but the keeper of one squalid shop was still dozing over his pan of coals between a stack of aged bread-sheets and a simmering kettle of sour-milk soup. I prodded him into semi-wakefulness and, gathering in the gkebis, sat down in his place. He dipped up a bowl of soup from force of habit, then catching sight of me for the first time, generously distributed the jelly-like mixture over my outstretched legs.

The second serving reached me in the orthodox manner. To the nibbling Arabs who had ranged themselves on the edge of the circle of light cast by the shop lamp, a bowl of soup was an ample meal for one man. When I called for a second, they stared open-mouthed. Again I sent the bowl back. The bystanders burst forth in a roar of laughter which the deserted labyrinth echoed back to us a third and a fourth time, and the boldest stepped forward to pat their stomachs derisively.

I inquired for an inn as I finished. A ragged Sampson stepped into the arc of light and crying "taala," set off to the westward. Almost at a trot, he led the way by cobbled streets, down the center of which ran an open sewer, up hillocks and down, under vaulted bazaars and narrow archways, by turns innumerable.

He stopped at last before a high garden wall, behind which, among the trees, stood a large building of monasterial aspect.

"Italiano faranchee henak," he said, raising the heavy iron knocker over the gate and letting it fall with a boom that startled the dull ear of night. Again and again he knocked. The muffled sound of an opening door came from the distant building. A step fell on the graveled walk, a step that advanced with slow and stately tread to within a few feet of the gate; then a deep, reverberant voice called out something in Arabic.

I replied in Italian; "I am a white man, looking for an inn."

The voice that answered was trained to the chanting of masses. One could almost fancy himself in some vast cathedral, listening to

an invocation from far back in the nave, as the words came, deep and sharp-cut, one from another: "Non si riceveno qui pellegrini." The scrape of feet on the graveled walk grew fainter and fainter, a heavy door slammed, and all was still.

The Arab put his ear to the keyhole of the gate, scratched his head in perplexity, and with another "taala" dashed off once more. A no less devious route brought us out on the water front of the back bay. In a brightly lighted café sat a dozen convivial souls over narghilehs and coffee. My cicerone paused some distance away and set up a wailing chant in which the word "faranchee" was often repeated. Plainly, the revelers gave small credence to this cry of Frank out of the night. Calmly they continued smoking and chattering, peering indifferently, now and then, into the outer darkness. The Arab drew me into the circle of light. A roar went up from the carousers and they tumbled pell-mell out upon us.

My guide was, evidently, a village butt, rarely permitted to appear before his fellow-townsman in so important a rôle. Fame, at last, was knocking at his door. His first words tripped over each other distressingly, but his racial eloquence of phrase and gesture came to the rescue, and he launched forth in a panegyric such as never congressional candidate suffered at the hands of a rural chairman. His zeal worked his undoing. From every dwelling within sound of his trumpet-like voice poured forth half-dressed men who, crowding closely around, raised a Babel that drowned out the orator before his introductory premise had been half ended. An enemy suggested an adjournment to the café and left the new Cicero — the penniless being denied admittance — to deliver his maiden speech to the unpeopled darkness.

The keeper, with his best company smile, placed a chair for me in the center of the room; the elder men grouped themselves about me on similar articles of furniture; and the younger squatted on their haunches around the wall. The language of signs was proving a poor means of communication, when a native, in more elaborate costume, pushed into the circle and addressed me in French. With an interpreter at hand, nothing short of my entire biography would satisfy my hearers; and to avoid any semblance of partiality, I was forced to swing round and round on my stool in the telling, despite the fact that only one of the audience understood the queer faranchee words. The proprietor, meanwhile, in a laudable endeavor to make hay while the sun shone, made the circuit of the room at frequent

intervals, asking each with what he could serve him. Those few who did not order were ruthlessly pushed into the street, where a throng of boys and penniless men flitted back and forth on the edge of the light, peering in upon us. Anxious to secure the good-will of so unusual an attraction, the keeper ran forward each time my whirling brought him within my field of vision to offer a cup of thick coffee, a narghileh, or a native liquor.

I concluded my saga with the statement that I had left Sidon that morning.

"Impossible!" shouted the interpreter. "No man can walk from Sidra to Soor in one day."

"Soor?" I cried, recognizing the native name for Tyre, and scarcely believing my ears. "Is this Soor?"

"Is it possible," gasped the native, "that you have not recognized the ancient city of Tyre? Yes, indeed, my friend, this is Soor. But if you have left Sidon this morning you have slept a night on the way without knowing it."

I turned the conversation by inquiring the identity of the worthies about me. The interpreter introduced them one by one. The village scribe, the village barber, the village carpenter, the village tailor, and — even thus far from the land of chestnut trees — the village blacksmith were all in evidence. Most striking of all the throng in appearance was a young man of handsome, forceful face and sturdy, well-poised figure, attired in a flowing, jet-black gown and almost as black a fez. From time to time he rose to address his companions on the all-important topic of faranchees. A gift of native eloquence of which he seemed supremely unconscious, and the long sweep of his gown over his left shoulder with which he ended every discourse, recalled my visualization of Hamlet. I was surprised to find that he was only a common sailor, and that in a land where the seaman is regarded as the lowest of created beings.

"Hamlet" owed his position of authority on this occasion to a single journey to Buenos Ayres. After long striving, I succeeded in exchanging with him a few meager ideas in Spanish, much to the discomfiture of the "regular" interpreter, who, posing as a man of unexampled erudition, turned away with an angry shrug of the shoulders and fell upon my unguarded knapsack. I swung round in time to find him complacently turning the film-wind of my kodak and clawing at the edges in an attempt to open it. If one would keep his possessions intact in the East he must sit upon them, for not even the

apes of the jungle have the curiosity of the Oriental nor less realization of the difference between mine and thine.

The city fathers of Tyre, in solemn conviviality assembled, resolved unanimously that I could not be permitted to continue on foot. Some days before, midway between Tyre and Acre, a white man had been found, murdered by some blunt instrument and nailed to the ground by a stake driven through his body. The tale was told, with the fullness of detail doted on by our yellow journals, in French and crippled Spanish; and innumerable versions in Arabic were followed by an elaborate pantomime by the village carpenter, with Hamlet and the scribe as the assassins, and the tube of a water-pipe as the stake. Midnight had long since passed. I promised the good citizens of Tyre to remain in their city for a day of reflection, and inquired for a place to sleep.

Not a man among them, evidently, had thought of that problem. The assemblage resolved itself into a committee of the whole and spent a good half hour in weighty debate. Then the interpreter rose to communicate to me the result of the deliberations. There was no public inn in the city of Tyre — they thanked God for that. But its inhabitants had ever been ready to treat royally the stranger within their gates. The keeper of the café had a back room. In that back room was a wooden bench. The keeper was moved to give me permission to occupy that back room and that bench. Nay! Even more! He was resolved to spread on that bench a rush mat, and cover me over with what had once been the sail of his fishing-smack. But first he must ask me one question. Aye! The citizens of Tyre, there assembled, must demand an answer to that query and the spokesman abjured me, by the beard of Allah, to answer truthfully and deliberately.

I moved the previous question. The village elders hitched their stools nearer, the squatters strained their necks to listen. The man of learning gasped twice, nay, thrice, and broke the utter silence with a tense whisper: —

"Are you, sir, a *Jew?*"

I denied the allegation.

"Because," went on the speaker, "we are haters of the Jews and no Jew could stop in this café over night, though the clouds rained down boulders and water-jars on our city of Tyre."

The keeper fulfilled his promise to the letter and, putting up the shutters of the café, locked me in and marched away.

Tyre is now a miserable village connected with the mainland
by a wind-blown neck of sand

Agriculture in Palestine. There is not an ounce of iron about the plow

The nephew of the village carpenter, a youth educated in the American Mission School of Sidon, appointed himself my guide next morning. The ancient city of Tyre is to-day a collection of stone and mud hovels, covering less than a third of the sandy point that once teemed with metropolitan life, and housing four thousand humble humans, destitute alike of education, arts, and enterprise. Our pilgrimage began at the narrow neck of wind-blown sand — all that remains of the causeway of Alexander. To the south of the present hamlet, once the site of rich dwellings, stretched rambling rows of crude head-stones over Christian and Mohammedan graves, a dreary spot above which circled and swooped a few sombre rooks. On the eastern edge a knoll rose above the pathetic village wall, a rampart that would not afford defense against a self-confident goat. Below lay a broad playground, worn bare and smooth by the tramp of many feet, peopled now by groups of romping children and here and there an adult loafing under the rays of the December sun. Only a few narrow chasms, from which peeped the top of a window or door, served to remind the observer that he was not looking down upon an open space, but on the flat housetops of the closely-packed city.

Further away rose an unsteady minaret, and beyond, the tree-girdled dwelling of the Italian monks. To the north, in the wretched roadstead, a few decrepit fishing smacks, sad remnants of the fleets whose mariners once caroused and sang in the streets of Tyre, lay at anchor. Down on the encircling beach, half buried under the drifting sands and worn away by the lapping waves, lay the ruins of what must long ago have been great business blocks. The Tyreans of to-day, mere parasites, have borne away stone by stone these edifices of a mightier generation to build their own humble habitations. Even as we looked, a half dozen ragged Arabs were prying off the top of a great pillar and loading the fragments into a dilapidated feluca.

A narrow street through the center of the town forms the boundary between her two religions. To the north dwell Christians, to the south Metawalies, Mohammedans of unorthodox superstitions. Their women do not cover their faces, but tattoo their foreheads, cheeks, and hands. To them the unpardonable sin is to touch, ever so slightly, a being not of their faith. Ugly scowls greeted our passage in all this section. I halted at a shop to buy oranges. A mangy old crone tossed the fruit at me and, spreading a cloth over her hand, stretched it out. I attempted to lay the coppers in her open palm. She

snatched her hand away with a snarl and a display of yellow fangs less suggestive of a human than of a mongrel over a bone.

"Hold your hand above hers and drop the money," said my companion. "If you touch her, she is polluted."

To a mere unbeliever the danger of pollution seemed reversed. But mayhap it is not given to unbelievers to see clearly.

Once across the line of demarkation cheery greetings sounded from every shop. Generations of intermarriage have welded this Christian community into one great family. Often the youth halted to observe: "Here lives my uncle; that man is my cousin; this shop belongs to my sister's husband; in that house dwells the brother-in-law of my father."

America was the promised land to every denizen of this section. Hardly a man of them had given up hope of putting together money enough to emigrate to the new world. The brother of my guide voiced a prayer that I had often heard among the Christians of Asia Minor.

"We hope more every day," he said, "that America will some time take this land away from the Turks, for the Turks are rascals and the king rascal is the Sultan at Stamboul. Please, you, sir, get America to do this when you come back."

My cicerone was a true Syrian, in his horror of travel. His family had been Christians — of the Greek faith — for generations, and Nazareth and Jerusalem lay just beyond the ranges to the eastward; yet neither he, his father, nor any ancestor, to his knowledge, had ever journeyed further than to Sidon. His teachers had imbued him with an almost American view of life, had instilled in him a code of personal morals at utter variance with those of this land, in which crimes ranging from bribery to murder are discussed in a spirit of levity by all classes. But they had not given him the energy of the West, nor convinced him that the education he had acquired was something more than an added power for the amassing of metleeks. Some day, when he had money enough, he would go to America to turn his linguistic ability into more money. Meanwhile, he squatted on his haunches in the filth of Tyre, waiting more patiently than Micawber for something to "turn up."

The highest ideal, to the people he represented, is the merchant — a middle-man between work and responsibility who may drone out his days in reposeful self-sufficiency. The round of the streets led us to the liquor and fruit shop kept by his father, a flabby-skinned fel-

low who stretched his derelict bulk on a divan and growled whenever a client disturbed his day-dreams. To his son he was the most fortunate being in Tyre.

"Why," cried the youth in admiration, "he never has to do anything but rest in his seat all day and put up his shutters and go home at night! Would you not like to own a shop and never have to work again all the days of your life?"

My answer that the dénouement of such a fate would probably be the sighing of willows over a premature grave was lost upon him.

An unprecedented throng was gathered in the café when I reached it in the evening. The proprietor danced blindly about the room, well nigh frantic from an ambitious but vain endeavor to serve all comers. "Hamlet," done with his day's fishing and his sea-going rags, was again on hand to give unconscious entertainment. The village scribe, if the bursts of laughter were as unforced as they seemed, had brought with him a stock of witty tales less threadbare than those of the night before; and the expression on the face of my guide, and his repeated refusals to interpret them, suggested that the stories were not of the jeune fille order.

The village carpenter was the leader of the opposition against my departure on foot, and finding that his pantomime had not aroused in me a becoming dread of the Bedouin-infected wilderness, he set out on a new tack. A coasting steamer was due in a few days. He proposed that the assembled Tyreans take up a collection to pay my passage to the next port, and set the ball rolling by dropping a bishleek into his empty coffee cup. A steady flow of metleeks had already set in before my protests grew vociferous enough to check it. Why I should refuse to accept whatever they proposed to give was something very few of these simple fellows could understand. The carpenter wiped out all my arguments in the ensuing debate by summing up with that incontestable postulate of the Arab: "Sir," he cried, by interpreter, appealing to the others for confirmation, "if you go to Acre on foot, you will get tired!"

I slept again on the rush mat. My guide and his uncle accompanied me through the city gate next morning, still entreating me to reconsider my rash decision. The older man gave up just outside the village and with an "Allah m'akum'" (the Lord be with you) hurried back, as if the unwonted experience of getting out of sight of his workshop had filled him with unconquerable terror. The youth halted beyond the wind-blown neck of sand, and, after entreating me to send

for him as soon as I returned to America, fled after his uncle. From this distance the gloomy huddle of kennels behind recalled even more readily than a closer view those lines of the wandering bard:

"Dim is her glory, gone her fame,
Her boasted wealth has fled.
On her proud rock, alas, her shame,
The fisher's net is spread.
The tyrean harp has slumbered long,
And Tŷria's mirth is low;
The timbrel, dulcimer, and song
Are hushed, or wake to woe."

For the first few miles the way led along the hard sands of the beach. Beyond, the "Ladder of Tyre," a spur of the Lebanon falling sharply off into the sea, presented a precipitous slope that I scaled with many bruises. Few spots on the globe present a more desolate prospect than the range after range of barren hills that stretch out from the summit of the "Ladder." Half climbing, half sliding, I descended the southern slope and struggled on across a trackless country in a never-ceasing downpour.

It was the hour of nightfall when the first habitation of man broke the monotony of the lifeless waste. Half famished, I hurried towards it. At a distance the hamlet presented the appearance of a low fortress or blockhouse. The outer fringe of buildings — all these peasant villages form a more or less perfect circle — were set so closely together as to make an almost continuous wall, with never a window nor door opening on the world outside. I circled half the town before I found an entrance to its garden of miseries. The hovels, partly of limestone, chiefly of baked mud, were packed like stacks in a scanty barnyard. The spaces between them left meager passages, and, being the village dumping ground and sewer as well as the communal barn, reeked with every abomination of man and beast. In cleanliness and picturesqueness the houses resembled the streets. Here and there a human sty stood open and lazy smoke curled upward from its low doorway; for the chimney is as yet unknown in rural Asia Minor.

A complete circuit of the "city" disclosed no shops and I began a canvass of the hovels, stooping to thrust my head through the smoke-choked doorways, and shaking my handkerchief of coins in the faces of the half asphyxiated occupants, with a cry of "gkebis." Wretched hags and half-naked children glared at me. My best pulmonary efforts

evoked no more than a snarl or a stolid stare. Only once did I receive verbal reply. A peasant whose garb was one-fourth cloth, one-fourth the skin of some other animal, and one-half the accumulated filth of some two-score years, squatted in the center of the last hut, eating from a stack of newly baked bread-sheets. Having caught him with the goods, I bawled "gkebis" commandingly. He turned to peer at me through the smoke with the lack-luster eye of a dead haddock. Once more I demanded bread. A diabolical leer overspread his features. He rose to a crouching posture, a doubled sheet between his fangs, and, springing at me half way across the hut, roared, "MA FEESH!"

Now there is no more forcible word in the Arabic language than "ma feesh." It is rich in meanings, among which "there is none!" "We have n't any!" "None left!" "Can't be done!" and "Nothing doing!" are but a few. The native can give it an articulation that would make the most aggressive of bulldogs put his tail between his legs and decamp. My eyes certainly had not deceived me. There was bread and plenty of it. But somehow I felt no longing to tarry, near nightfall, in a fanatical village far from the outskirts of civilization, to wage debate with an Arab who could utter "ma feesh" in that tone of voice. With never an audible reply, I fled to the encircling wilderness.

The sun was settling to his bath in the Mediterranean. Across the pulsating sea to the beach below the village stretched an undulating ribbon of orange and red. Away to the eastward, in the valleys of the Lebanon, darkness already lay. On the rugged peaks a few isolated trees, swaying in a swift landward breeze, stood out against the evening sky. Within hail of the hamlet a lonely shepherd guarded a flock of fat-tailed sheep. Beyond him lay utter solitude. The level plain soon changed to row after row of sand dunes, unmarked by a single footprint, over which my virgin path rose and fell with the regularity of a tossing ship.

The last arc of the blazing sun sank beneath the waves. The prismatic ribbon quivered a moment longer, faded, and disappeared, leaving only an unbroken expanse of black water. Advancing twilight dimmed the outline of the swaying trees, the very peaks lost individuality and blended into the darkening sky of evening. In the trough of the sand dunes the night made mysterious gulfs in which the eye could not distinguish where the descent ended and the ascent began.

Invariably I stumbled half way up each succeeding slope. The

shifting sands muffled to silence my footsteps. On the summit of the ridges sounded a low moaning of the wind, rising and falling like far-off sobbing. A creative imagination might easily have peopled the surrounding blackness with flitting forms of murderous nomads. Somewhere among these never-ending ridges the "staked faranchee" had been done to death.

Mile after mile the way led on, rising and falling as rhythmically as though over and over the same sandy billow. Sunset had dispelled the rain, but not a star broke through the overcast sky, and only the hoarse-voiced boom of the breakers guided my steps. Now and then I halted at the summit of a ridge to search for the glimmer of a distant light and to strain my ears for some other sound than the wailing of the wind and the muffled thunder of the ocean. But even Napoleon was once forced to build a hill from which to sweep the horizon before he could orientate himself in this billowy wilderness.

The surly peasant was long since forgotten when, descending a ridge with my feet raised high at each step in anticipation of a succeeding ascent, I plunged into a slough in which I sank almost to my knees. From force of habit I plowed on. The booming of the waves grew louder, as if the land receded, and the wind from off the sea blew stronger and more chilling. Suddenly there sounded at my feet the rush of waters. I moved forward cautiously and felt the edge of what seemed to be a broad river, pouring seaward. It was an obstacle not to be surmounted on a black night. I drew back from the brink and, finding a spot that seemed to offer some resistance beneath my feet, threw myself down.

But I sank inch by inch into the morass, and fearful of being buried before morning, I rose and wandered towards the sea. On a slight rise of ground I stumbled over a heap of cobblestones, piled up at some earlier date by the peasants. I built a bed of stones under the lee of the pile, tucked my kodak in a crevice, and pulling my coat over my head, lay down. A patter of rain sounded on the coat, then another and another, faster and faster, and in less than a minute there began a downpour that abated not once during the night. The heap afforded small protection against the piercing wind, and, being short and semicircular in shape, compelled me to lie motionless on my right side, for only my body protected the kodak and films beneath. The rain quickly soaked through my clothing and ran in rivulets along my skin. The wind turned colder and whistled through the chinks of the pile. The sea boomed incessantly, and in the surrounding marshes

colonies of unwearying frogs croaked a dismal refrain. Thus, on the fringe of the Mediterranean, I watched out the old year, and, though not a change in the roar of the sea, the tattoo of the storm, nor the note of a frog, marked the hour, I was certainly awake at the waning.

An Oriental proverb tells us that "He who goes not to bed will be early up." He who goes to bed on a rock pile will also be up betimes — though with difficulty. The new year was peering over the Lebanon when I rose to my feet. My left leg, though creaking like a rusty armor, sustained me; but I had no sooner shifted my weight to the right than it gave way like a thing of straw and let me down with disconcerting suddenness in the mud. By dint of long massaging, I recovered the use of the limb; but even then an attempt to walk in a straight line sent me round in a circle from left to right. Daylight showed the river to be lined with quicksands. It was broad and swift, but not deep, and some distance up the stream I effected a crossing without sinking below my armpits. Far off to the southeast lay a small forest. A village, perhaps, was hidden in its shade, and I dashed eagerly forward through a sea of mud.

The forest turned out to be a large orange grove, surrounded by a high hedge and a turgid, moat-like stream. There was not a human habitation in sight. The trees were heavily laden with yellow fruit. I cast the contents of my knapsack on the ground, plunged through moat and hedge, and tore savagely at the tempting fare. With half-filled bag I regained the plain, caught up my scattered belongings, and struck southward, peeling an orange. The skin was close to an inch thick, the fruit inside would have aroused the dormant appetite of an Epicurean. Greedily I stuffed a generous quarter into my mouth — and stopped stock-still with a sensation as of a sudden blow in the back of the neck. The orange was as green as the Emerald Isle, its juice more acrid than a half-and-half of vinegar and gall! I peeled another and another. Each was more sour and bitter than its forerunner. Tearfully I dumped the treasure trove in the mire and stumbled on.

Two hours later, under a blazing sun — so great is the contrast in this hungry land between night and unclouded day — I entered a native village, more wretched if possible than that of the night before. Scowls and snarls greeted me in almost every hut; but one hideously tattooed female pushed away the proffered coins and thrust into my hands two bread-sheets the ragged edge of which showed the marks of infant teeth. They were as tender as a sea boot, as palatable as a

bath towel, and satisfied my hunger as a peanut would have satisfied that of an elephant. But no amount of vociferation could induce the villagers to part with another morsel, and, thankful for small favors, I trudged on.

A well-marked path, inundated here and there and peopled by bands of natives, turned westward beyond an ancient aqueduct, and at noonday I passed through the fortified gate of Acre. The power of faranchee appetites was the absorbing topic of conversation in the stronghold when I fell in with a band of emigrating Bedouins, and departed. The white city of Haiffa, perched on the nose of recumbent Mt. Carmel across the bay, seemed but a stone's throw distant. It was an illusion of sea and sun, however. Long hours I splashed after the Arabs through surf and rivulet along the narrow beach, my shoes swinging over my shoulder, and night had fallen before we parted in the Haiffan market place.

At a Jewish inn, in Haiffa, I made the acquaintance of a fellow-countryman. He was a *dragoman* of a well-known tourist company, born in Nazareth, of Arab blood, and had never been outside the confines of Asia Minor. His grandfather had lived a few years in New York, and, though the good old gentleman had long since been gathered to his fathers, his descendants were still entitled to flaunt his naturalization papers in the faces of the Turkish police and tax-gatherers and to greet travelers from the new world as compatriots. Nazry Kawar, the dragoman, was overjoyed at the meeting. He dedicated the afternoon to drawing, for my benefit, sketches of the routes of Palestine, and took his leave, promising to write me a letter of introduction to his uncle, a Nazarene dentist.

Early the next morning I passed through the vaulted market of Haiffa and out upon the road to Nazareth. It was really a road, repaired not long before for the passage of the German Emperor; but already the labor of the Sultan's servants had been half undone by the peasants, to whom a highway is useful only as an excellent place in which to pitch stones picked up in the adjoining fields. For once the day was clear and balmy and a sunshine as of June illuminated the rugged fields and their tillers. Towards noon, in the bleak hills beyond the first village, two Bedouins, less bloodthirsty than hungry, fell upon me while I ate my lunch by the wayside. Though they bombarded me with stones from opposite sides, they threw like boarding-school misses and dodged like ocean liners, and I had wrought more injury than I had received when I challenged them to a race down the highway. They

On the road between Haifa and Nazareth I meet a road-repair gang, all women but the boss

On the summit of Jebel es Sihk, back of Nazareth. From left to right: Shukry Nasr, teacher; Elias Awad, cook; and Nehmé Simán, teacher; my hosts in Nazareth

were no mean runners, but the appearance over the first hill of a road-repair gang, a score of bronze-faced, sinewy women under command of a skirt-clad male, forced them to postpone their laudable attempt to win favor with the houris.

An hour later I gained the highest point of the route. Far below the highway, colored by that peculiar atmosphere of Palestine a delicate blue that undulated and trembled in the afternoon sunshine, stretched the vast plain of Esdraelon, walled by mountain ranges that seemed innumerable leagues away. The route crawled along the top of the western wall, choked here between two mountain spurs, breathing freely there on a tiny plateau, and, rounding at last a gigantic boulder, burst into Nazareth.

A mere village in the time of Christ, Nazareth covers to-day the bowl-shaped valley in which it is built to the summits of the surrounding hills and, viewed from a distance, takes on the form of an almost perfect amphitheatre. In the arena of the circus, a teeming, babbling bazaar, I endeavored in vain to find the dentist Kawar to whom my letter was addressed. When my legs grew aweary of wandering through the labyrinth and my tongue refused longer to deform itself in attempts to reproduce the peculiar sounds of the Arabic language, I sat down on a convenient and conspicuous bazaar stand, rolled a cigarette, and leaned back in the perfect contentment of knowing that I should presently be taken care of. Near me on all sides rose a whisper, in the hoarse voice of squatting shopkeepers, in the treble of passing children under heavy burdens, a whisper that seemed to grow into a thing animate and hurried away through the long rows and intricate by-ways of the market as no really living thing of the Orient ever does hurry, crying: "Faranchee! Fee wahed faranchee!" Before my first cigarette was well lighted an awe-struck urchin paused nearby to stare unqualifiedly, with the manner of one ready to take to terror-stricken flight at the first inkling of a hostile move on the part of this strange being, in dress so ludicrous, and whose legs were clothed in separate garments! Here, surely, was one of those dread boogiemen who are known to dine on small Arabs, and so near that — perhaps he had better edge away and take to his heels before — but no, here are a dozen men of familiar mien collecting in a semicircle back of him! And there comes his uncle, the camel driver. Perhaps the boogieman is not ferocious after all, for the men crowd close around, calling him "faranchee" and "efendee," and appearing not in the least afraid.

The camel-driver is doubly courageous — who would not be proud

to be his nephew? — for he actually addresses himself to the strange being, while the throng behind him grows and grows.

"Barhaba!" says the camel-driver, in greeting, "Lailtak saeedee! Where does the efendee hail from? Italiano, perhaps?"

"No, American."

"Amerikhano!" The word runs from mouth to mouth and the faces of all hearers light up with interest. "America? Why, that is where Abdul el Kassab, the butcher, went, long years ago. It is said to be far away, further than "El Gkudis" (Jerusalem) or "Shaam" (Damascus). But the camel driver has derived another bit of information. Listen! "Bahree! The faranchee is a bahree, a sailor, a man who works on the great water, the 'bahr' that anyone can see from the top of Jebel es Sihk above, and on the shores of which this same camel driver claims to have been. It is even rumored that to reach this America of the faranchee and of Abdul el Kassab, one must travel on the great water! Indeed, 'tis far away, and, were the faranchee not a bahree, how could he have journeyed from far-off America to this very Nazra?"

But my Arabic was soon exhausted and the simple Nazarenes, to whom a man unable to express himself in their vernacular was as much to be pitied as a deaf-mute, burst forth in sympathetic cries of "meskeen" (poor devil). The camel driver, striving to gain further information, was rapidly becoming the butt of the bystanders, when a native, in more festive dress, pushed through the throng and addressed me in English. I held up the letter.

"Ah," he cried, "the dentist Kawar?" and he snatched the note out of my hand and tore it open.

"But, here," I cried, "are you the dentist?"

"Oh, no, indeed," said the native, without looking up from the reading.

"Then what right have you to open that letter?" I demanded, grasping it.

The native gazed at me a moment, the picture of Innocence Accused and astonished at the accusation.

"Oh, sir," he said; "the Kawar is my friend. If it is my friend's letter, it is my letter. If it is my letter, it is my friend's letter. Arabs make like that, sir. I am Elias Awad, cook to the British missionary and friend to the dentist. Very nice man, but gone to Acre. But Kawar family live close here. Please, you, sir, come with me."

Ten minutes later I had been received by the family Kawar like

a long-lost friend. One glimpse of their dwelling showed them to be people of Nazarene wealth and position. The head of the house, keeper of a dry-goods store, had once been sheik or mayor of Nazareth and was a man of extreme courtesy. He spoke only Arabic. His sons, ranging from bearded men to a boy of nine, had been impartially distributed among the mission schools of the town. Two spoke English and one German and were stout champions of the Protestant faith. The fourth and fifth spoke French and Italian, respectively, and posed as devout Catholics. The youngest, already well versed in Russian, clung to the faith of his father, the orthodox Greek. Amid the bombardment of questions in four languages I found a moment, here and there, to congratulate myself on my ignorance of the tongue of the Cossacks.

While the evening meal was preparing, the cosmopolitan family, a small army in assorted sizes, sallied forth to show me the regulation "sights." With deep reverence for every spot reminiscent of Jesus, they pointed out Mary's Well, the Greek church over the supplying spring, the workshop of Joseph, and many a less authentic relic; and, utterly oblivious of the incongruity, halted on the way back to cry: "This, sir, is the house of the only Jew, thank God, who still dwells in Nazareth!"

Supper over, the Protestants dragged me away to a little church on the brow of the valley. The service, though conducted in Arabic, was Presbyterian even to the tunes of the hymns; the worship quite the antithesis. For the men displayed the latest creations in fezes in the front pews, and the women, in uniform white gowns, sat with bated breath on the rear benches. Now and then a communicant kicked off his loose slippers and folded his legs in his seat; and the most devout could not suppress entirely a desire to stare at a faranchee who sat bareheaded in church! After the benediction the ladies modestly hurried home, but not one of the males was missing from the throng that greeted our exit. To these my companions hastened to divulge my qualities, history, and raison d'être, as exactly as some information and an untrammeled imagination permitted. Among the hearers were two young men, by name Shukry Nasr and Nehmé Simán, teachers of English in the mission school, who, eager for conversational practice and touched with the curiosity of the Arab, refused to leave until I had promised to be their guest after my stay with the Kawars was ended.

The next day was one long lesson on the customs and traits of the

better-class Arab. Shukry Nasr and Nehmé Simán called early and led me away to visit their friend, Elias, the cook. On the way I protested against their refusal to allow me to spend a single metleek even for tobacco. "You are our guest, sir," said Nehmé; "we are very glad to have you for a guest and to talk English. But even if we did not like, we should take good care of you, for Christ said, 'Thou shalt house the stranger who is within thy gates.'"

"Why," cried the cook, when our discussion had been carried into his room in the mission, "in the days of my father, for a stranger to pay a place to live would have been insult to all. A stranger in town! Why, Let *my* house be his — and *mine!* — and *mine!* would have shouted every honorable citizen!"

"But Nazareth is getting bad," sighed Shukry. "The faranchees who are coming are very proud. They will not eat our food and sleep in our small houses. And so many are coming! So some inns have been built and even the Italian monastery like to have pay. Very disgraceful!"

"Did you give any policemen a nice whipping?" asked Elias, suddenly.

"Eh?" I cried.

"If a faranchee comes to our country," he explained, "or if we go to live in America and come back, the policeman cannot arrest."

"Yes, I know," I answered.

"If a policeman touches you, then, you must give him a nice whipping," continued the cook. "If *my* father had been to America I would give nice whippings every day. Many friends I have —" and he launched forth into a series of anecdotes the heroes of which had returned with naturalization papers for the sole purpose, evidently, of making life unendurable for the officers of the Sultan.

"If they only refuse to obey the soldiers," said Nehmé, "that is nothing. Everybody does that. But here is the wonderful! They do not have even to give backsheesh!"

"Do you have backsheesh in America?" demanded Shukry.

"Ah — er — well — the name is not in common use," I stammered.

"It is in my town of Acre that the backsheesh is nice," cried the cook, proudly, "and the nicest smuggling. Have you seen that big, strong gate to my town, sir? Ah, sir, many nice smugglings go in there. But how you think?" — he winked one eye long and solemnly — "The nice smugglings are the ladies. Many things the lady can carry under her long dress."

"But there are the guards," I put in.

"The guards? Quick the guard get dead if he put the finger on the lady."

"Then why not have a woman guard?" I suggested.

"Aah!" cried the cook. "How nasty!"

"But the man," he went on, sadly, "must pay backsheesh if he smuggle a pound of arabee (native tobacco, so-called in distinction from "Stambouli," the revenued weed) or if he make a man dead."

"What!" I cried, "Backsheesh for murder?"

"Oh, of course," apologized the cook, "if the man that makes dead has no money, he is made dead by the soldiers —"

"'Kill' is the English word, Elias," put in Nehmé.

"Oh, yes," continued Elias, "if the man that kills has money, the officer sends a soldier after him. The man puts his head through his door and drops some mejeediehs in the soldier's hand. Then the soldier comes back and gives almost all the mejeediehs to the officer, and they decide that the man has run away and cannot be find. But if it is a faranchee has been made — er — killed, very bad, for the consul tell the government to find the man and kill him — and if the man have not so much money that the government cannot find — very bad!"

"To-morrow," said Shukry, as I stropped the razor which the cook invited me to use, "you are coming to live with me."

"To-morrow," I answered, "I go to the Sea of Galilee."

"Ah!" cried the three, in chorus, "Then we give you a letter to our good friend, Michael Yakoumy. He is teacher in Tiberias and he takes much pleasure to see you."

"And you take a letter for my wife," said Elias. "She is nurse in the hospital. Often I write but the government lose the letter."

"So you 're married?" I observed, through the lather.

"No! no!" screamed the cook. "How you can come to my house if I am married? This only my — my —"

"Fiancée," said Nehmé.

"Or sweetheart," said Shukry.

"Aah!" muttered Elias, "I know the word 'sweetheart.' But I don't like. How you call a woman *sweet?* Every woman bad, and if she live in Palestine or America, she cannot be trust"; and Nehmé and Shukry, in all the wisdom of seventeen years, nodded solemnly in approval.

"But *your* fiancée —" I began.

"All the same," said the cook, "but every man shall get married — Look out, sir, you are cutting your moustaches!"

"Why not?" I asked.

"Aah!" shrieked the cook, as I scraped my upper lip clean, "why faranchees make that? So soon I my moustaches would shave, so soon would I cut my neck."

There is a road that, beginning down by Mary's Well and winding its way out of the Nazarene arena, leads to Cana and the Sea of Galilee. Nehmé and Shukry, however, true sons of Palestine, utterly ignored the highway when they set out next morning to accompany me to the first village. From the Kawar home they struck off through the village and traversed Nazareth as the crow flies, with total disregard of the trend of the streets. Down through the market, dodging into tiny alleys, under vaulted passageways, through spaces where we were obliged to walk sidewise, they led the way. Where a shop intervened, they marched boldly through it, stepping over the merchandise and even over the squatting keeper, who returned their "good morning" without losing a puff at his narghileh. With never a moment of hesitation in the labyrinth of bazaars nor among the dwellings above, they stalked straight up the slope of Jebel es Sihk, by trails at times almost perpendicular, and out upon a well-marked path that led over the brow of the hill.

At the summit they paused. To the north rose the snow-capped peak of Mt. Hermon. Between the hills, to the west, peeped the sparkling Mediterranean. Eastward, unbroken as far as the eye could see in either direction, stretched the mighty wall of the trans-Jordan range. The view embraced a dozen villages, tucked away in narrow ravines, clinging to steep slopes, or lying prone on sharp ridges like broken-backed creatures. Shukry's enumeration savored of Biblical lore. There was Raineh, down in the throat of the valley; further on Jotapta and Ruman; across the gorge Sufurieh, the home of fanatical rascals among whom Christians are outlaws. Every hamlet has a character of its own in Palestine. The inhabitants of one may be honest, industrious, kindly disposed towards any advance of civilization; while another, five miles distant, boasts a population of the worst scoundrels unhung, bigoted, clannish, and sworn enemies to every fellow-being who has not had the good fortune to be born in their enlightened midst. This diversity of characteristics, so marked that a man from across the valley is styled "foreigner," makes resistance to the Turk impossible and breeds a deadly hatred that raises even

to-day that sneering question, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"

The teachers took their leave in Raineh. Beyond Cana, perched on a gentle rise of ground among flourishing groves of pomegranates, the highway wavered and was lost in the mire. I set my own course across a half-inundated plain. Late in the afternoon the Horns of Hutin, adorned by a solitary shepherd whose flock grazed where once the multitude listened to the Sermon on the Mount, rose up to assure me that I had not gone astray, and an hour later the ground dropped suddenly away beneath my feet and the end of my pilgrimage lay before me. Near seven hundred feet below sea level, in a hollow of the earth dug by some gigantic spade, glimmered the blue Sea of Galilee, already in deep shadow, though the sunshine still flooded the plain behind me. I stepped over the edge of the precipice and, slipping, stumbling from rock to rock, steering myself by clutching at bush and boulder, fell headlong down into the city of Tiberias.

A city of refuge in ancient times, Tiberias is to-day one of the few towns of Palestine in which the Jewish population preponderates. It is a human cesspool. Greasy-locked males squat in the doorways of its wretched hovels; hideous females, dressed in an open jacket stiff with filth, which discloses to the public gaze their withered, bag-like breasts and their bloated abdomens, wallow through the sewerage of the streets in company with foul brats infected with every unclean disease from scurvy to leprosy. Dozens of idiots, the hair eaten off their heads, and their bodies covered with running sores, roam at large and quarrel with mongrel curs over the refuse. For these are the "men possessed of devils," privileged members of society in all the Orient. An Arab proverb asserts that the king of fleas holds his court in Tiberias. To be king of all the fleas that dwell in Palestine is a position of far greater importance than to be czar of all the Russias; and it is strange that His Nimble Majesty has not long ago chosen a capital in which it would not be necessary to disinfect his palace daily.

The home of Michael Yakoumy, from the windows of which stretched an unobstructed view of the sea from the sortie of the Jordan to the site of Capernaum, was a model of cleanliness. Here, in this wretched hamlet, that whole-hearted descendant of Greek immigrants toils year after year at a ludicrous wage, striving to instill some knowledge and right living into the children of the surrounding rabble. He was, all unknowingly, a true disciple of the "simple life" in its best sense, displaying the interest of a child in the commonplace occur-

rences of the daily round, not entirely ignorant of, but wholly unenvious of the big things of the world outside.

I attended the opening of his school next morning and then turned back towards Nazareth. At the foot of the precipitous slope a storm broke and the combination of water and jagged rocks wrought disaster to my worn-out shoes. When I reached sea level they were succumbing to a rapid disintegration. In the first half-mile across the plain the heels, the soles, the uppers, the very laces, dropped bit by bit along the way. For a time the cakes of mud that clung to my socks protected my feet, but the socks, too, wore away and left me to plod on barefooted over the jagged stones of the field.

Long before I had reached the mountainous tract about Cana, I was suffering from a dozen cuts and stone-bruises; and the journey beyond must have appealed to a Hindu ascetic as a penance by which to win unlimited merit. As for Cana, it will always be associated in my mind with that breed of human who finds his pleasure in bear-baiting and cock-fighting. For, as I attempted to climb into the village market, my feet refused to cling to the slimy hillside and I skidded and sprawled into a slough at the bottom, amid shrieks of derisive laughter from a group of villagers above.

By the time I reached Raineh it was as dark as a pocket, and the path over the Jebel was out of the question. The winding highway pursued its leisurely course and led me into Nazareth at an hour when every shop was closed. For some time I could not orientate myself and wandered shivering through the silent bazaars, the cold, dank stones underfoot sending through me a thrill of helplessness such as Anteus must have felt when lifted off the strength-giving earth. Then a familiar corner gave me my bearings, and I hobbled away to the home of Elias.

The village shoemaker, being summoned next morning, appeared with several pairs of Nazarene slippers, heelless and thin as Indian moccasins; again shod, I set out with the teachers for the home of Shukry. It was a simple dwelling of the better class, halfway up the slope of Jebel es Sihk, and from its roof spread out the bowl-shaped village at our feet, Mt. Tabor, and the lesser peaks away in the distance. The recent death of his father had left the youth to rule over the household. In all but years he was a mature man, boasting already a bristling moustache, for humans ripen early in the East.

It was January seventh according to our calendar, or Christmas Day according to the Russian, a time of festival among the Greek churchmen and of ceremonial visits among all Christians. Our shoes

off, we were sitting on a divan when the guests began to appear. Each arrival — all men, of course, though Shukry's mother hovered in the far background — was greeted by the head of the family standing erect in the center of the room. There was no hand-shaking, but a low kow-tow by guest and host and a carelessly mumbled greeting. Then the visitor slid out of his slippers, squatted on the capacious divan, and, when all were firmly seated, the salutation "naharak saeed" was exchanged, this time being clearly enunciated. If the newcomer was a priest, Shukry's small brother slid forward to kiss his hand and retired again into an obscure corner. These formalities over, the guest, priest or layman, was served cigarettes and a tiny cup of coffee. Frankness is the key to the Arab character. The hypocritical smirks of our own social gatherings are not required of the Nazarene who lays claim to good breeding. If the visitor was a friend or fellow-churchman of his host an animated conversation broke out and, interrupted at brief intervals by new arrivals, raged long and vociferously. Those who professed a different faith — the Greek priests especially — sipped their coffee in absolute silence, puffed at a cigarette, and, with another "naharak saeed," glided into their slippers and departed.

Later in the day I made, with my host, the round of the Christian families, deafened with questions in Protestant homes, suffered to sit in painful silence in Greek dwellings, and undermining my constitution with every known brand of cigarette. Our course ended at the Kawar home. The former mayor, dressed in latest faranchee garb, with a vast expanse of white vest, sat cross-legged in his white stocking-feet, a fez perched on his head. The conversation soon turned to things American.

"Many years ago," translated the eldest son, on behalf of his father, "I began to wonder why, by the beard of the prophet, faranchees come from a great, rich country like America to travel in a miserable land like ours."

A long dissertation on the joys and advantages of globe-trotting drew from the former sheik only an exclamation of "M'abaraf!" (I don't understand).

"An American who was in Nazareth long ago," he went on, by mouth of offspring, "told me a strange story. I did not believe him, for it cannot be true. He said that in America people *buy* dogs!" and the mere suggestion of so ludicrous a transaction sent the assembled group into paroxysms of laughter.

"They *do*," I replied.

The pompous ex-mayor fell into such convulsions of merriment that his rotund face grew the color of burnished copper.

"BUY dogs?" roared his sons, in a chorus of several languages, "But what for?"

Never having settled that question entirely to my own satisfaction, I parried it with another: "How do *you* get a dog if you want one?"

"W — w — w — why," answered the eldest son, wiping the tears from his eyes, "if anyone *wants* a dog he tells someone else and they give him one; but who ever WANTS a dog?"

Once the guest of the better-class Arab, the traveler is almost certain to be relayed from one city to another through an endless chain of the friends of his original host. I had announced my intention of leaving Nazareth in the morning. The ex-mayor, after attempting to frighten me out of my project by the usual bear-stories, wrote me four letters of introduction.

"Without these letters," he explained, "you would not dare stay in Gineen or Nablous, for my friends are the only Christians and those are very bad towns. My friends in Jerusalem and Jaffa — if you ever get there alive — may be able to help you find work."

CHAPTER VIII

THE WILDS OF PALESTINE

THE sun, rising red and clear next morning, put to rout even the protests of Nehmé and Shukry against my departure on Sunday. Elias sorrowfully said farewell at the mission gate. The teachers, carrying between them a package at which they cast mysterious glances now and then, conducted me to the foot of the Nazarene range. Pointing out a guiding mountain peak that rose above Gineen, far across the trackless plain of Esdraelon, they bade me good-by almost tearfully, thrust the package into my hands, and turned back up the mountain pass. Half certain of what the bundle contained, I did not open it until noonday overtook me, well out on the plain. Inside was a goodly supply of gkebis, oranges, native cheeses, and black olives; and at the bottom, a bundle of home-made cigarettes, and a package of "arabee," with a book of papers.

Late afternoon brought me to the edge of Esdraelon. A veritable garden spot, covered with graceful palms and waving pomegranates and perfumed with the fragrance of orange and lemon groves, covered the lower slope of the peak that had been my phare. Back of the garden stood the fanatical town of Gineen. The appearence of a defenseless unbeliever in their midst aroused its inhabitants to scowls and curses, and a few stones from a group of youngsters at a corner of the bazaar rattled in the streets behind me. My letter was addressed in native script. The squatting shopkeeper to whom I displayed it attempted to scowl me out of countenance, then, recalling his duty of hospitality towards whoever should enter his dwelling, called a passing urchin and, mumbling a few words to him, bade me follow. The urchin mounted the sloping market-place, made several unexpected turnings, and, pointing out a large house surrounded by a forbidding stone wall, scampered away like one accustomed to take no chances of future damnation by lingering at the entrance to a Christian hotbed.

I clanged the heavy knocker until the sound echoed up and down the adjoining streets, and, receiving no response, sat down on the curb. A

well-dressed native wandered by and I displayed the letter. He glared at it, muttered "etnashar sää" (twelve o'clock, i. e., nightfall by Arabic reckoning) and continued his way. From time to time visitors paused at neighboring gates or house doors and, standing in the center of the street, lifted up their voices in mournful wails that endured long enough to have given the wailer's pedigree from the time of Noah; and were finally admitted. Beggars made the rounds, wailing longer and more mournfully than the others, seldom ceasing until a few bread-sheets or coppers were tossed out to them. Bands of females, whose veils may have covered great beauty or the hideous visages of hags, drew up in a circle round me now and then to discuss my personal attractions, and to fill me with the creepy feeling one might experience at a visit of the White Caps or the Klu-Klux Klan.

Full two hours I had squatted against the wall when an old man, in European garb, slowly ascended the street, mumbling to himself as he ran through his fingers a string of yellow beads. He paused at the gate and pulled out a key. I sprang to my feet and handed him the letter. He read it with something of a scowl and, motioning to me to wait, went inside. A long delay followed. At last the gate groaned and gave exit to the ugliest creature in the Arab world. He was a youth of about twenty, as long as a day without bread, and too thin to deflect a ray of light. His shoulders were bowed until his head stuck out at right angles to his body; his long, yellow teeth protruded from his lips; in his one eye was the gleam of the rascal; and his very attitude stamped him as one who hated faranchees with a deadly hatred. Around his lank form hung a half-dozen long, flowing garments as from a hat-rack, and on his head was the coiffure of the Bedouin.

I caught enough of his snarling harangue to know that he was a family domestic ordered to conduct me to the servants' quarters. On the opposite side of the long street he unlocked a battered door, and admitted me to a hovel furnished with a moth-eaten divan and a pan of dead coals. A dapper young native entered soon after and addressed me in fluent French.

"My family is in a sad situation," he explained; "we are friends of the Kawar and so always the friends of his friends. But we are the only Christians in Gineen and so we can only give you servant quarters." His train of reasoning was not particularly clear. "But you must not stay in Gineen to-night. If you wait until to-morrow, you must go on alone and in the mountains are Bedouins who every day catch travelers, and fill their eyes and mouths and noses with

sand, and drag them around by a rope, and cut them up in small pieces, and scatter them all around! You must go to-night, with the mail-train. Then you will be safe."

"I 've tramped all day," I protested; "I 'll find lodgings in the town if I am inconveniencing your family."

"Mon Dieu!" shrieked the young man; "there you would be cut to pieces in an hour! Gineen hates Christians. If you stop here, they will beat my family —"

His distress, real or feigned, was so acute that I assented at last to his plan. He ordered the misshapen servant to bring me supper, and departed.

The living caricature followed his master and returned with a bowl of lentils and several "side dishes." With him appeared two companions, almost as unprepossessing of mien as himself; and he had no sooner placed the food on the floor than all three squatted around it and, clawing with both hands, made way with the meal so rapidly that I had barely time to snatch a few mouthfuls. When the last scrap had disappeared, the newcomers fell to licking out the bowls. The elongated servant set up the wailing monotony that is the Arabic notion of a song, and, swaying back and forth and thrusting out his misplaced fangs in a fixed leer, he continued for an unbroken two hours a performance which the roars of mirth from his mates proved was no compliment to faranchees.

Towards nine in the evening he turned his fellow-rascals into the street, and motioning to me to take up my knapsack, dived out into the night. By good fortune I managed to keep at his heels without splitting my head on the huts among which he dodged and doubled in an effort to shake me off before we arrived at the mail-train khan. The keeper was a bitter enemy of unbelievers and admitted me only under protest, and with a steady flow of vile oaths that was unchecked as long as I remained in the building. My guide deposited his cadaverous frame on a heap of chaff and took up his song of derision and his leering where he had left off.

At the appearance of the mail train the song ceased, and the singer, having briefly stated the desire of his master, disappeared. The snarls of the servant and the khankeeper had been friendly greetings compared with those of the three drivers of the mail train. To all appearances they were more to be feared than capture by sand-stuffing Bedouins; but my sponsor was a man of higher caste than mere muleteers and would surely in some degree hold them responsible for my

safe arrival — so it seemed — and I determined to stick to the plan. Of the four mules that made up the train, one was saddled with the mail-sacks and, at a signal from the leader, the driver sprang as' ride the others. The khan door opened, letting in a cutting draught of January air, and I followed the party outside, fully expecting to be offered a mount. The train, however, kept steadily on. The hindmost Arab signed to me to grasp the crupper of his mule; then he cut the animal across the flanks perilously near my fingers. Only then did the truth burst upon me. Instead of letting me ride, as certainly the Christian had expected them to do, the rascals had taken this golden opportunity to reverse the usual order of things Oriental. The true believers would serenely bestride their animals and the faranchee might trot behind like a Damascus donkey-boy. I fancied I heard several chuckles of delight, half-smothered in blatant curses.

The night was as black as a Port Saïd coaling nigger. In the first few rods I lost my footing more than once and barked my shins on a dozen boulders. The practical joke of the Arabs, however, was not ended. Once far enough from the khan to make a return difficult, the leader shouted an order, the three struck viciously at their animals, and with a rattle of small stones against the boulders away went the party at full gallop. I lost my grip on the crupper, broke into a run in an attempt to keep the pace, slipped and slid on the stones, struck a slope that I had not made out in the darkness, and stumbling halfway up it on my hands and knees, sprawled at full length over a boulder.

I sat up and listened until the tinkle of the pack-mule's bell died away on the night air; then rose to grope my way back to the khan. It was closed and locked. By some rare fortune I found my way to the street in which the Christian lived and pushed open the door of the hovel. The room was unoccupied, though the lighted wick of a tallow lamp showed that the servant had returned. I spread out three of the four blankets folded away on the divan and lay down. A moment later the walking mizzenmast entered, leaped sidewise as though he saw the ghost of a forgotten victim, and spreading the remaining blanket in the most distant corner, curled up with all his multifarious garb upon him. I rose to blow out the light, but the Arab set up a howl of abject terror that might have been heard on the northern wall of Esdraelon, and I desisted.

The route between Gineen and Nablous was in strange contrast to that of the day before, much like a sudden transition from Holland to an uncivilized Tyrol. Directly back of the fanatical town lay

range after range of rocky peaks, half covered with tangled forests of oak and terebinth. A pathway there was, but it indicated little travel, and broke up now and then into forking trails from which I could only choose at random. Against a mountain side, here and there clung a black-hide village of roving Bedouins. These were the tribes which, if rumor was to be believed, busied themselves with corralling lone Christians and scattering their remains among the wooded valleys. To-day, however, they were engaged in a no more awful vocation than the tending of a few decimated flocks of fat-tailed sheep.

Late in the morning I came in sight of the mud village of Dothan. A well-marked path marched boldly up to the first hovel, ran close along its wall, swung round behind the building, and ended. It neither broke up into small paths nor led to an opening in the earth; it merely vanished into thin air as if the hovel were the station of some aërial line. A score of giant mongrels, coming down upon me from the hill above, gave me little time for reflection. Luckily — for my clothing, at least — there lay within reach a long-handled kettle such as natives use in boiling lentils; and half the mangy population of the village, tumbling down the slope to gaze upon the unprecedented sight of a lone faranchee in their midst, beheld him laying about him right merrily. Not one of the villagers made the least attempt to call off the curs. It was the usual Arab case of every man's dog no man's dog.

The village above was a crowded collection of dwellings of the same design as those of the Esquimaux, with mud substituted for snow, perched on a succession of rock ledges that rose one above the other. The human mongrels inside them answered my inquiries with snarls and curses, one old hag exerting herself to the extent of rising to spit at me through her toothless gums. Wherever a narrow passageway gave suggestion of a trail I scrambled up the jagged faces of the rock ledges in an effort to find the route. As well might a landlubber have attempted to pick out the fore-royal halyards. Regularly I brought up in back yards where several human kennels choked the ground with their sewerage and the air with their smoke, and the reward of every scramble was several gashes in my hands and volleys of curses from the disturbed householders.

I caught sight at length of a peasant astride an ass, tacking back and forth through the town, but mounting steadily higher. Shadowing him, I came out upon an uninhabited ledge above. The precipitous path beyond was but a forerunner of the entire day's journey. Over

the range I overtook the peasant, and not far beyond a horseman burst out of a tributary cut and joined us. The peasant carried a cudgel and a long, blunt knife, and seemed quite anxious to keep both in a position that would attract attention. The horseman, in half-civilian, half-military trappings, carried two pistols and a dagger in his belt, a sword at his side, and a long, slim gun across his shoulders. The countryman offered me a mount, but, as his beast was scarcely my equal in weight, I contented myself with trudging at the heels of the animals.

About noon, in a narrow plateau, we came upon an open well from which a party of Bedouins, that I should not have chosen to meet alone, scattered at sight of the officer. My companions tethered their animals on the lip of grass and drew out their dinners. The officer knelt beside the well with a pot; but the water was out of reach of his corpulent and much-garbed form, and the peasant being of the Tom Thumb variety, I won the eloquent gratitude of both by coming to the rescue. Vainly I struggled to do away with the food that was thrust upon me from either side. The officer was, evidently, a man of wide experience and savoir-faire. Not only did he display no great astonishment at the faranchee manner of eating, but he owned a mysterious machine that filled the peasant with speechless awe. The mystery was none other than an alcohol lamp! Not until the coffee was prepared could the countryman be enticed within ten feet of it. But once having summoned up courage to touch the apparatus, he fell upon it like a child upon a mechanical toy and examined its inner workings so thoroughly that the officer spent a half-hour in fitting it together again.

During the afternoon the peasant turned aside to his village, and not far beyond, the horseman lost his way. I could not but speculate on the small chance I should have had alone on a route which eluded a native well acquainted with the country. We had followed for some distance a wild gorge which, ending abruptly, offered us on one side an impassable jungle of rocks and trees, and on the other a precipitous slope covered for hundreds of feet above with loose shale and rubble. The officer dismounted and squatted contentedly on his haunches. In the course of an hour, during which my companion had not once moved except to roll several cigarettes, a bedraggled *fellah* approached and replied to the officer's question by pointing up the unwooded slope. Three times the horse essayed the climb, only to slide helplessly to the bottom. The Arab handed me his

gun and, dismounting, sought to lead the steed up the slope by tacking back and forth across it. Several times the animal fell on its haunches and tobogganed down the hill, dragging the cavalryman after him. The gun soon weighed me down like a cannon; but we reached the summit at last, and were glad to stretch ourselves out on the solid rock surface of the wind-swept peak.

The officer spread out food between us. To the southward lay a panorama that rivaled the prospect from the summit of Jebel es Sihk. Two ranges of haggard mountains, every broken peak as distinct in individuality as though each were fearful of being charged with imitation of its fellows, raced side by side to the southeast. Between them lay a wild tangle of rocks and small forests through which a swift stream fought its way, deflected far to the southward in its struggle towards the Mediterranean by the rounded base of the mountain beneath us. Over all the scene hovered utter desolation and solitude, as of an undiscovered world innumerable leagues distant from any human habitation.

For an hour we followed the trend of the stream far below, rounding several peaks and gradually descending. The path became a bit more distinct; but our surroundings lost none of their savage aspect, and as far as the eye could see appeared neither man, beast, nor fowl. Suddenly the cavalryman, rounding a jutting boulder before me, reined in his horse with an excited jerk, and, grasping his sword, pointed with the scabbard across the valley. "Nablous!" he shouted. I hastened to his side. On a small plateau far below us, and moated by the rushing stream, in a setting of haggard wilderness, stood a city, a real city, with street after street of closely packed stone buildings of very modern architecture. Like a regiment drawn up in close ranks, the houses presented on four sides an unwavering line; inside there was not an open space, outside hardly a shepherd's shelter.

We wound down the mountain path to an ancient stone bridge that led directly into the city. A squad of those ragged, half-starved soldiers indigenous to the Turkish empire would have stopped me at the gate but for my companion, who, with a wave of the hand, drove them off. Without prelude we plunged into the seething life of the bazaars. The streets were as narrow, as intricate, and as numerous as those of Damascus; but their novelty lay in the fact that they were nearly everywhere vaulted over, and one had the sensation of strolling through a crowded subway from which rails and cars were lack-

ing. The shoes of the horse rang sharp and metallic against the cobblestones as the animal plowed his way through the jabbering multitude, and by keeping close at his heels, I escaped the returning waves of humanity that rebounded from the unbroken line of shops on either side of the narrow passages to fill our wake. The cavalryman dismounted before a shop that minutely resembled its neighbors, handed the reins to a keeper who advanced to meet him, and urgently invited me to spend the night in the inn above. My Nazarene friends, however, had intrusted me with personal epistles, which I felt in duty bound to deliver.

The addressee was one Iskander Saaba, a Nazarene school teacher. His house was not nearly so easily found as the proof that the inhabitants of Nablous were fanatical, unreasonable haters of Christians. In the cities of Asia Minor the streets are neither named nor the houses numbered. Mr. Smith, you learn, lives near the house of Mr. Jones. If you pursue the investigation further you may gather the information that Mr. Jones lives not far from the house of Mr. Smith, and all the raving of western impatience will not gain you more. A few yards from the inn a water carrier and a baker's boy struck me simultaneously in the ribs with their respective burdens. A wayward donkey, bestrided by a leering wretch, ran me down. A tradesman carrying a heavy beam turned a corner just in time to give me a distinct view of a starry firmament in a vaulted passageway. These things, of course, were purely accidental. But when three stout rascals grasped the knapsack across my shoulders and clung to it until I had kicked one of them into a neighboring shop, and a corner street vendor went out of his way to step on my heels, I could not so readily excuse them. As long as I remained in the teeming bazaars these sneaking injuries continued. Wherever I stopped a crowd quickly gathered and showed their enmity openly by jostling against me, by reviling the whole faranchee race, and even by spitting on my nether garments.

In a residential district my inquiries were answered at last, and I was soon welcomed with true Arabian hospitality by Iskander Saaba. A most pleasant evening I spent in the dwelling of the youthful teacher, a cosy house adjoining the mission school, the windows of which looked down on the roaring river far beneath. The family and a white-haired native, whom Saaba introduced as "my assistance in the school," plied me with questions ranging from the age of my grandfather to the income of my various cousins, and gasped when I

pleaded ignorance. But these things were but harmless examples of the frankness of the Arab, at which only an underfed mortal could have taken offense.

A steady rain was falling next morning and my host awoke me with the old saw —"To-morrow is just as good a day as to-day." When I had convinced him that this was not an Occidental proverb, he set out to pilot me through the city. On the way he paused often to purchase food or tobacco, with which he stuffed my knapsack in spite of my protests, answering always: "It is far to Jerusalem, and some day I will come to America." All in all, he did not spend twenty-five cents; but I was well nigh staggering under my load when I took leave of him at the southern gate of the city and struck off across the oblong plateau shielded by Mt. Ebal and Mt Gerizim. Since the day when it was called Shechem, a city of refuge, Nablous has carried on much traffic with Jerusalem, and in recent years the pusillanimous Turk has set himself to the task of building a connecting highway. The section beyond the southern gate promised well; but in this rainy season it was a river of mud which clung to my shoes in great cakes and made progress more difficult than in the trackless mountains to the north.

The highway ended abruptly at noonday, as I had been warned it would. "It is all complete," Shukry had said, "except over the mountain, the highest mountain in Palestine, and over that it runs not." The barrier must, indeed, have been a problem to the engineers, for it towered hundreds of feet above, as nearly perpendicular as nature is wont to construct her works. Diagonally up the face of the cliff a path was cut, but no spiral stairway, compressed within a slender tower, ever offered more difficult ascent. At the summit I came again upon the road, as wide, as finely ballasted, as well engineered, as the most exacting traveler could have demanded; yet, as it stood, utterly useless. It had been built that carriages might pass from Nablous to the Holy City; but no wheeled vehicle in existence could have been dragged up that wall-like hillside; and the sure-footed ass, who still carries on the traffic between the two cities, would make the journey exactly as well had the highway never been proposed. One could read in that road the character of the power that holds Palestine, and fancy its builders, like the highway, wandering irresolutely from east to west and west to east, and halting at the highest point to peer helplessly over the dizzy edge upon the section below.

Long after nightfall I stumbled upon an isolated shop, occupied

by the keeper and an errant salesman of tobacco. The building was no more than a wooden frame covered over with sheet iron; and the rain, that began soon after I turned in with the drummer on one of the shelves that served as bunks, thundered on the roof through the night and made sleep as impossible as inside the bass drum at a Wagnerian performance. In the morning, a deluge more violent than I had ever known, held us prisoners; and, the weather being bitterly cold, I kept to my shelf and listened to the roaring of the tin shack through the longest day that ever rained and blew itself into the past tense.

The storm had abated somewhat when I set out again on the following day. One stone village broke the dreary prospect; the ancient Bethel, beyond the sharp hills of which the highway side-stepped to the eastward. The rain of the preceding days had, no doubt, left the peculiar atmosphere of Palestine unusually humid. In no other way can I account for the strange vision that appeared late in the morning. The hills ahead were somewhat indistinct, in the valleys lay a thick, gray mist, while overhead, the sky was dull and leaden. Before me, well above the horizon, hung a long dark cloud which, as I looked, took on gradually the faint shape of a distant line of buildings. It could have been no more than a mirage, for beneath it was a considerable strip of sky; yet it grew plainer and plainer until there rode in the heavens, like the army in that weird painting of the soldier's dream, a dull, gray city, a long city, bounded at one end by a great tower, at the other shading off into nothing. Then suddenly it vanished. Black clouds, hurrying westward from across Jordan, wiped out the vision as one erases a lightly penciled line. Yet the image was Jerusalem. Miles beyond, the fog lifted and showed the city plainly, and it was that same long city bounded on the eastward by a great tower, but with solid footing now on a dull, drear hill that sloped to the west. The highway led downward across bleak fields, past the reputed Tombs of the Kings and Judges, to-day the refuges of shivering shepherd boys, and through the Damascus gate into the crowded bazaars of the Holy City.

A howling horde swept me away through markets infinitely dirtier and far less picturesque than those of Damascus, up and down slimy stone steps, jostling, pushing, trampling upon me at every turn, not maliciously, but from mere indifference to such familiar beings as faranchees. At the end of a reeking street I turned for refuge to an open doorway, through which I had caught a glimpse of a long greensward and a great mosque with superbly graceful dome. A

The shopkeeper and the traveling salesman with whom I spent two nights and a day on the lonely road to Jerusalem. Arabs are very sensitive to cold, except on their feet and ankles

A high official of Mohammedanism. It being against the teachings of the Koran to have one's picture taken, master and servant turn away their faces

shout rose from a rabble of men and boys at one side of the square. In Damascus, such demonstrations, bursting forth each time I entered a mosque enclosure, had soon subsided. So I marched on with an air of indifference. The shouts redoubled. Men and youths came down upon me from every direction, howling like demons, and discharging a volley of stones, some of which struck me in the legs, while others whistled ominously near my head. I beat a hasty retreat. Not until later in the day did I know the reason for my expulsion. I had trespassed on the sacred precincts of the mosque of Omar on the summit of Mt. Moriah, where no unbeliever may enter without an escort of bribed soldiers.

A second attempt to escape the throng led me down more slimy steps and along a narrow alley to a towering stone wall, where Hebrews, rich and poor, filthy and bediamonded, alternately kissed and beat with their fists the great beveled blocks of stone, shrieking and moaning, with tears streaming down their cheeks. It needed no inquiry to tell me that I had fallen upon the "Jews' Wailing-Place."

Random wandering brought me at noonday into the European section about David street. Light as had been my expenditures in Palestine, my fortunes had fallen. A sum barely equal to forty cents jingled in my pockets. It was high time to seek employment. With this end in view, I sought out the addressee of my letter. Unfortunately, his influence was not far-reaching in the city, for he was a mere man-of-all-work in a mission school outside its walls.

"But it is all right," he cried; "if you are an American, I will take you to 'the Americans.'"

"The Americans" proved to be a community of my countrymen of Quaker ancestry, who dwelt in a great modern building to the northwest of the city. The errand boy introduced me into the inner courtyard, thickly planted in orange and lemon trees, and a self-appointed committee invited me in to supper. It seemed almost a new experience to sit again at a white-decked table, partaking of such familiar dishes as roast pork and rice pudding, with men and women of my own land chatting on every side. An aged native of Pennsylvania, for no better reason, apparently, than that he had crossed the Atlantic forty years before on the ship that had brought me to Glasgow, espoused my cause and set himself to the task of supplying me with employment, and of getting me to heaven as well. The meal over, the colony adjourned to the parlor on the second floor for a short re-

ligious meeting, and then spent the evening in mild merry-making. Several visitors dropped in, among them two natives in faultless evening attire, a disconcerting contrast to my own, but still wearing their fezes. My sponsor announced one as the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the other as the Chief of Police. Though they did not speak English, neither would have been out of place in the most accomplished society.

"These men," said the Pennsylvanian, "are Mohammedans, and each has several wives. Yet for years they have been welcome guests here, for according to their code of morals they are very moral men. The Superintendent, there, is a famous singer." He was even then beginning a duet with one of the young ladies at the piano, and that with the clear tone of a man who sait faire.

"The Chief of Police has been rather roughly used?" I suggested. Across his left cheek was a great scar and his left eye was missing.

"Every Christian," said the man beside me, "should blush with shame at sight of that scar. Each year, as you know, the Christian pilgrims to Jerusalem celebrate feasts and festivals in the churches here, and for years clashes and free fights have frequently broken out between followers of rival creeds. For that reason the Turks have found it necessary to establish a guard in every general Christian edifice. Two years ago, at the Feast of the Assumption in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Greek and Armenian pilgrims, in spite of the guards, fell upon each other. The Chief, there, a man of very peaceful and kindly temperament, went among the combatants and spoke to them through an interpreter. Instead of dispersing, the frenzied pilgrims swept down upon this whole-hearted Mohammedan, and some good Christian, of one side or the other, slashed him across the cheek with a heavy knife and gouged out his eye. They tell us, you know, over in America that Mohammedans are savages and Christians are civilized. I, too, used to think that; but I have lived a long time in Jerusalem now."

Several members of the community, in business in David street, promised to find me work. A round among them in the morning, however, brought only reiterated promises, and I wandered away through the city. Scores of Christian pilgrims were engaged in a similar occupation, and my weather-beaten and bedraggled appearance led more than one of these devout nomads to accost me. I soon fell in with an Italian who had spent nearly two years in making his way

from his home in Urbino to carry out a vow made in an hour of distress.

"Why do you not go to a hospice?" he asked, when he had learned my situation. "I have been in one for three weeks and get both food and bed. There is the Russian, the Greek, the Armenian, the Coptic, the Italian, the French —"

"But no American?" I put in, less eager for charity than for a glimpse of the life within these institutions.

"N — no," admitted the pilgrim; "no American — but I 'll tell you! Go to the French hospice. Archbishop Ireland of America is there this week and —"

"Where is it?" I asked.

The pilgrim led the way through several narrow, uneven streets and pointed out a time-blackened door. A French servant met me in the anteroom and listened to my request.

"Are you a Catholic?" he demanded.

"No," I answered.

"Wait," he murmured.

A few moments later he returned with the information that "the reverend father could admit only those of the faith." "You must look to the Protestants," he concluded.

"But I believe there are no Protestant hospices here?" I suggested.

"Ah! It is true," cried the servant, waving his hands above his head, "but tant pis! You should be a Catholic and all would be well."

I turned away to the American consulate. If there was work to be had by faranchees in the city, the consul, surely, should know of it. I fought my way through a leering throng of doorkeepers and *kawasses* into the outer office. While I waited for an interview the population of our land increased. A greasy, groveling Jew, of the laboring classes, the love-locks at his temples untrimmed and unperfumed, pushed timidly at the swinging door several times, entered, and bowed and scraped before the native secretary to attract his attention.

"Gonsul," he wheezed, holding out his naturalization papers, "Gonsul, I vant rregister my vife; she got boy."

The secretary glanced at the papers and duly enrolled the new arrival as an American citizen, with all the immunities and privileges thereunto appertaining.

A moment later I was admitted to the inner office. The kindly, white-haired consul asked for a detailed account of my journey in Palestine.

"I am often much exercised," he said, when I had finished; "I am often much incensed that, with all the hospices for every other brand of Christian, there are no accommodations in Jerusalem for American pilgrims. It seems like cruel discrimination —"

"But I am scarcely a pilgrim," I suggested.

"Yes, you are! Yes, you are!" cried the consul; "But never mind. I shall give you a note to the Jewish hotel across the way and you may pay the bill when you earn the money. For 'the Americans' will find you work, you may be sure. See me again before you leave the city."

I mounted an outdoor stairway on the opposite side of David street to a very passable hostelry. The window of the room assigned me offered a far-reaching view. Directly below, walled by the backs of adjoining shops, stenched the ancient pool of Hezekiah. To the north, east, and south spread a jumble of small buildings, their dome-shaped roofs of mud or stone thrown into contrast by a few houses covered with red tiles, the general level broken by several minarets and the architectural hotch-potch of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. At the further edge of the city, yet so near as to be as plainly visible from base to dome as in the compound itself, stood the beautiful mosque of Omar. From the valley of Jehoshaphat beneath rose the Mount of Olives; the stone-terraced Garden of Gethsemane of the lower slope backed by a forest of olive trees; the summit crowned by the three-storied tower on the "Russian Calvary." Beyond, a desolation of rolling hills stretched away to the massive wall of the mountains of Moab.

Descending to the street after dinner, I came upon the Pennsylvanian. With him was an English resident who wished some documents turned into French. I began on them at once and worked late into the night. In the three days following, I interspersed my sight-seeing with similar tasks. The bazaars were half-deserted during this period; for on Friday the Mohammedans held festival, Saturday and Sunday were respectively the Jewish and Christian Sabbath, and the influence of each of the sects on the other two was so marked that the entire population lost energy soon after the middle of the week. On Saturday, the hotel guests subsisted on the usual meals of meat,

meat, meat; this time served cold, for what orthodox Jew could bid his servants build a fire on the Sabbath? The day grew wintry cold, however. The proprietor summoned a domestic, and, speaking a Yiddish that closely resembled German, issued several orders, ending with the wholly irrelevant remark, "I believe this is one of the coldest days we have had in many a year."

The servant scratched his moth-eaten poll, shuffled off, and returned with a bundle of fagots that were soon crackling in the tiny sheet-iron stove.

Sunday found me unoccupied, and, pushing through the howling chaos at the Jaffa gate, I strolled southward along a highway, which afforded, here and there, a glimpse of the Dead Sea. Turning off at the tomb of Rachel, I climbed into the wind-swept village of Bethlehem.

From a cobblestone square in the center of the town, a low doorway, flanked by blocks of unhewn stone so blackened by the none too cleanly hands of centuries of pilgrims as to give it the appearance of a huge rat hole, offered admittance to the Church of the Nativity. A score of worshiping Christians gave me welcome in the grotto of the manger by tramping on my lightly-shod toes and I quickly retreated to the cedar-groined church above. At their altar in one section of the transept a group of bejeweled dignitaries of the Greek church were celebrating mass. Plainly, it was a solemn and holy occasion to the patriarchs and their assistants. A small army of acolytes hovered round the priests like blackbirds over an ear of corn, advancing and retreating with great robes and surplices of rich design, each of which served only for a kow-tow to some object of religious veneration. In the center of the transept, a few feet away from the worshiping priests, just where the Greek territory meets that of some other sect, stood the Sultan's guard. He was a typical soldier of the Porte, his uniform of patches stretched and bagged out of all semblance to modern clothing, his head covered with a moth-eaten fez, its tassel long since departed and its lower edge turned from its original red to a greasy brown through long contact with the oily scalp of its wearer. Lazily he leaned on the muzzle of the musket under his armpit, one dusty foot resting on the other, and gazed with an unshaven grimace, half of scorn, half of pity, at those gullible beings who performed their amusing antics to a false god. His relief arrived soon after. The scoffer stalked out of the church, cast his

musket on the cobblestones, and turning an ultrasolemn face towards Mecca, stepped out of his shoes and bowed down in afternoon prayer.

From the Pools of Solomon, I returned to Jerusalem. The English resident came next morning with another document, which I returned at noon and, having paid my bill, presented myself at the consulate to announce my departure.

"How much money have you?" asked the consul.

"A ten-franc piece."

"Good! Now, my lad, take my advice. There is a steamer leaving Jaffa for Egypt to-morrow. Take the afternoon train — ten francs will more than pay your fare — and once in Jaffa perhaps you can get a berth on the steamer. Ask the American consul there to give you his assistance."

"I can save money by walking," I ventured.

"Impossible!" cried the consul; "It 's forty miles to Jaffa; the ship leaves at noon, and there is not another for ten days. Take the train. You can't walk there in time."

Just to prove that the consul had underestimated my abilities as a pedestrian, I spent half my wealth for a roll of films and struck out on the highway to the coast. Long after dark I usurped lodgings in Latron, the home of the penitent thief, and put off again before daylight, in a pouring rain, across the marshy plain of Sharon. It was nearly noon when I reached the port; but the sea was running mountain high and the task of loading the steamer was proceeding slowly. A native offered to pilot me to the dwelling of the American consul for a few coppers. Urged on by an occasional jab in the ribs, he splashed through the streets, ankle-deep in Jaffa soil in solution, to a large hotel that made great effort to pose as an exclusive faranchee establishment. I dashed into the office in a shower of mud that raised a shriek of horror from the immaculately attired clerk, and called for the consul.

"Impossible!" cried the clerk; "The consul is at dinner."

Two steps towards the dining-room convinced him that my business was of pressing importance. He snatched wildly at my dripping garments and sent a servant to make known my errand.

Had the low comedian of a Broadway burlesque suddenly appeared in full regalia amid these Oriental surroundings, I should have been far less astonished than at the strange being who pounced down upon me. He was tall, this American consul, tall as any man who hoped to

The view of Jerusalem from my window in the Jewish hotel

Sellers of oranges and bread in Jerusalem. Notice Standard Oil can

be ranked as a man could venture to be, spare of shank as the contortionist who drives the envious small boy to bathe himself in angle-worm oil in the secret recesses of the barn for the fortnight succeeding circus day — and he was excited. Several other things he was as well — among them, a Frenchman, and, despite his efforts, none but the words of his native tongue would go forth from his lips — and that foreign jargon it was not my place, as a common sailor, to understand. He stood framed in the doorway of the dining-room — though, to be frank, the frame was a good six inches too short, and wrinkled the picture sadly — and between whirlwind gusts of red hot Gaelic, tore at his dancing mane.

"Sacré nom d'un chien! — to be disturbed entre le dessert et le fromage — by a sunburned, muddy wretch — and with a knapsack! — Un misérable court-le-monde, mille tonnerres! — Un sans-sous — and these fellows were always after money —"

Had I been able to understand him, I might have protested. As it was, what more could I do than try to rush a word across the track where one train of invectives broke off and another began: —

"Say, mister, be youse the Amurican consil —?"

But the words were mercilessly ground under the wheels; —

"— And where should he get this money? — Mille diables! — Was he a millionaire because he was consul for a few countries? — Un vagabond! — Par le —"

"Say, mister, can't youse talk English?"

"Anglais — angl — engl — Engleesh — certainly he could parle Engleesh! — But to be called from dinner avant le demi-tasse — An American? — yes, yes, oui — certainment, American consul — and to be called out — Sailor, hein! — Aha! Quoi? — From Jerusa — Could n't be — no train — hein? — walk? — diable! — non! — impossible! — Comment? — consul in Jerusalem told — Par le barbe de — Help me? — A poor Jaffa consul with no salary help a man sent by the Jerusalem consul who drew des millards de francs! — le coquin — Hein? — Quoi? — My paper that? — A ragged sailor with a letter from the Secretary of State? — Un vagabond? — coming during dinner — Quoi? — my letter? — Quelle histoire — what a lie! — elle était volée! — Oui — If he did his duty, he would keep it for the lawful owner — elle était volée — still, he would —"

He certainly would, for I had already twisted it out of his hands.

"Diable! — Quoi? — Write letter to the cap! — did n't know him! — ship's agent — hein? certainly — one of his best friends — write letter?

--of course — but the din — and money? — Hein? — Quoi? — dis donc! — Pas d'argent? — no money? — vraiment! — sailor, and not want money! — Sainte Vierge au — Note? — certainly — at once — why had n't I said long ago — No! — no! — n'importe! — not the least harm done — was n't hungry anyway — appetite very poor — only a note? — pas d'ar — Delighted to know me — my letter? — certainly it was my letter — Never doubted it for a moment — Would I take a demi-tasse? — No? — Hurry? — of course — at once!"— and he was gone.

A moment later the clerk handed me an unfolded note and I hurried away to the wharf, a half-mile distant. The ship still rode at anchor. I rushed to the wicket and presented the epistle. Why had I not been warned that Jaffa was the refuge of worn-out comic opera stars? The agent who peered out at me wore a glass eye, a headdress of the Middle Ages, and — by the beard of Allah! — a celluloid nose.

His face puckered up as he read the missive — all, that is, except the nose, which preserved a noncommital serenity. "Ah!" he snored, drawing out a ticket from the rack, "Very well! The fare is twelve francs."

"The fare? But does n't the consul ask you to give me a berth as a sailor?"

The noseless one pushed the note towards me. It was in French, but a warning whistle from the harbor made me forget my ignorance of that language. The letter was as upset in construction as the consul had been when he noted my name. It ran: —

DEAR FRIEND: —

The bearer, Harris Frank, is an American sailor who wishes to go to Egypt. Will you kindly sell him a ticket and oblige, your humble, etc., etc.

——— ———,

American Consular Agent.

A letter authorizing the company to sell me a ticket that it would have been delighted to sell to any species of man or ape who had the money! It was as valuable as a letter from the mayor of New York would be in buying a subway ticket! I dumped my possessions recklessly on the floor and sped away to the hotel at a pace that spilled four natives in the mire, by actual count. The consul was as raving as before. He had just lain down for his siesta and was convinced that I had repented my refusal to ask for money. A few words reassured him. He fidgeted while I explained the desired wording of the new note; and I was soon speeding back to the owner of the junk-shop face.

He read the new communication after the leisurely way of the East, and said: —" Well, as a sailor we can give you a ticket at half-price — six francs."

I snatched the note out of his hand. The goblins catch that scatter-brained consul! He had unburdened himself as follows: —

DEAR FRIEND: —

The bearer, Frank Harris, is an American sailor without funds who wishes to go to Egypt. Kindly sell him a ticket as cheaply as possible, and oblige, etc., etc.

——— ———,

American Consular Agent.

Utterly indifferent to the rain, I sat down against a pillar outside the office. Four paltry francs rattled in my pocket. Long, penniless days on the Jaffa beach seemed my promised lot. Stevedores were struggling to breast the towering waves. Now and then a giant comber overturned a laden rowboat high on the beach. Barefooted natives waded into the surf with tourists in their arms. Each warning whistle seemed to thrust Egypt further and further away. If only —

I felt a tap on the shoulder. A young native in the uniform of Cook and Son was bending over me.

" Go on board anyway," he said.

" Eh? " I cried.

" The captain is English. If you are a sailor he will give you work."

" But I can't get on board," I answered.

For reply, the native pointed to the tourist-company boat, laden with baggage and mails, at the edge of the wharf. I snatched up my knapsack and dropped into the craft.

The steamer was weighing anchor when I scrambled up the gangway. I fought my way through a chaos of tumbled baggage, seasick natives, and bellowing seamen, and attempted to mount to the bridge. A burly Arab seaman pushed me back. When darkness fell on an open sea I had not yet succeeded in breaking through the bodyguard that surrounded the captain. Writhing natives covered every spot on the open deck. I crawled under the canvas that covered the winch, converted my bundle into a pillow, and fell asleep.

In what seemed a half-hour later I awoke to find the ship gliding along as smoothly as in a river. I crawled out on deck. A bright morning sun was shining, and before my astonished eyes lay Port Said. The ticket collector had neglected to look under the winch for passengers.

The steamer was held in quarantine for several hours. I purchased

food of a ship's boy and settled down to await the good will of the port doctors. As I lined up with the rest, to be thumped and prodded by order of His Majesty, the Khedive, a new plan flashed through my mind. The ship was to continue to Alexandria. That port, certainly, gave far easier access to the real Egypt than Port Saïd, and it was an unexplored city. Instead of disembarking with the others, therefore, I sought out the captain once more — and once more was repulsed by a thick-witted seaman.

I returned to the deck and sat down on a hatch. To my dismay, the native purser began to collect the tickets before the last tender was unloaded. He approached me and held out his hand.

"Where can I see the captain?" I demanded.

"M'abarafshee," he answered, shaking his head, "bilyeto!" (ticket).

Certainly I must offer some excuse for being on board without a ticket. The lean form of the purser bending over me called up the memory of the Jaffa consul. I rummaged through my pockets, and, spreading out his second note to the ship's agent, laid it in the purser's hand. The consul's yellow stationery bore a disconcerting contrast to the bundle of dark-blue tickets. The officer gave vent to his astonishment in an avalanche of Arabic.

"M'abarafshee!" I imitated.

He opened his mouth to launch a second avalanche, hesitated, scratched his head, and, with a shrug of the shoulders, went on gathering "bilyetos" from the native passengers.

Some time later he descended from the upper deck and, beckoning to me, led the way to the bridge. The steamer was preparing to get under way. The captain, a burly Briton, stormed back and forth across the ship, striving to give orders to the crew in such Arabic as he could muster, and bursting the bounds of that unnatural tongue with every fourth word, to berate the blockheads in forcible excerpts from the King's — private — English. His eye fell upon me.

"Here," he roared, profanely, 'tis true, but to the point, "what the bloody —— is all this?" and he waved the now ragged note in my face.

"Why, that 's a note from the Amurican consil in Jaffa, sir, sayin' I want t' ship for Egypt,"

The purple rage on the skipper's face, the result of his attempt to set forth in Arabic thoughts only expressible in English, subsided somewhat at the sound of his own tongue.

"But," he went on, in milder tones, "this note asks the company to

The Palestine beast of burden carrying an iron beam to a building in construction

Jews of Jerusalem in typical costume

LIBRARY OF THE
MASSACHUSETTS

give you as cheap a passage as possible; and it 's addressed to the agent, not to the captain of this ship."

"What, sir!" I cried, "Is that all? Why, the consil knowed I 'ad n't no money, sir."

"It 's open; why the devil did n't you read it?" retorted the skipper.

"Aye, sir," I answered, "but it 's wrote in some foreign lingo."

"Eh? — er — well, that 's right," admitted the commander, with a waver of pride in his voice. "It 's written in French, and this is what it says"— and he translated it.

"Why that bloomin' consil —" I gasped.

"American sailor, are you?" demanded the captain.

I handed him my Sardinian and Warwickshire discharges.

"Well," he mused, "if that note had been in English, I 'd —"

"I 'm ready to turn to with the crew, sir," I put in.

"N – no. That 'll be all right," said the skipper, stuffing the note into his pocket as he turned his attention to the seamen on the deck below. "Cover that hatch, you bloody fools, before a sea fills her!"

Early the next morning I disembarked in Alexandria.

CHAPTER IX

THE LOAFER'S PARADISE

HE who travels à force de bras may regulate his sight-seeing as exactly as the moneyed tourist by clinging to one fixed plan — to fall penniless and be forced to seek employment only in those cities with which he would become well acquainted. In all north Africa no spot offered more attractions for an extended stay than Cairo. Once arrived there, whatever the fates had in store for me, I should be on chosen ground. At all hazards I must reach Cairo before I "went broke."

On my second morning in Alexandria, I repaired to the railway station, only to find that I had delayed my departure a bit too long. The third-class fare to the capital was low, but, unfortunately, just three piastres more than I possessed. Should I take train as far as possible and finish the journey on foot and penniless, or should I save the money on hand for food en route and tramp the entire distance?

Pondering the question, I dropped into a bench on the Place Mohamed Ali, and fell to whittling a stick. A countryman, strolling by, paused to stare, and sitting down on the far end of the bench, watched me intently. Now a Frank is no more of a novelty in Alexandria than in Kansas City, even though in ragged garb; for, given a great port anywhere on the earth's surface, you will find Jack Tar, at least, rambling penniless and forlorn through her streets. Either the native was astonished to see a man work, even with his hands, when he was not paid to do so, or the knife had attracted his attention. Inch by inch, he slid along the bench.

"Very good knife, kwice cateer," he murmured.

Two months in the Arab world had given me vocabulary enough for simple conversations. "Aywa," I answered, tossing away the stick and closing the knife.

The fellah gave a gasp of delight.

"But it shuts up, like a door," he cried.

I opened and closed it several times for his edification; then slid down in my seat, my thoughts elsewhere.

"You sell it?" grinned the Arab.

"Eh!" I gasped, straightening up in astonishment, "you —"

"I 'll give you five piastres," wheedled the peasant, "gkamsa tarifa."

"Take it!" I cried, and, grasping the coin he held out to me, I dashed away to the station.

A half-hour later I was speeding southward across the fertile delta of the Nile. What a contrast was this land to that I had so lately left behind! Every few miles the train halted at a bustling city; between them mound-like fellaheen villages and well-cultivated fields raced northward. Inside the car — of American pattern — prosperous, well-groomed natives perused the latest newspapers and smoked world-famous cigarettes with the blasé air of Parisian commuters. Even the half-blind victims of ophthalmia leaned back in their seats in the perfect contentment of well-fed creatures. An eyeless pre-adamite in one corner roared with laughter at the sallies of his companions. Far more at ease was he, for all his affliction, than I, with neither friend nor acquaintance in the length and breadth of the continent.

The Oriental panorama grew dim. One could with difficulty distinguish in this ultra-flat country, where every object stood out sharply against the horizon, between a distant village and a reclining water-buffalo, nearer at hand. The western sky turned ruddy a moment, dulled to a brown, and the darkness that falls so quickly in tropical countries left me to stare at my own face beyond the window. An impressive reflection indeed! A figure to inspire prospective employers with confidence! The lights that were springing up across the plain were of no village where inhabitants welcomed strangers with open arms. Every click of the wheels brought me nearer the metropolis of Africa, a great city, of which I knew little more than the name, and where I should soon be set adrift in the darkness with the ludricrous sum of ten cents in my pocket! Perhaps in all Cairo there was not another penniless adventurer of my race? Even if there were, and a "vagabond's retreat" somewhere among these long rows of streets that flashed by as those of London in approaching St. Pancras, small chance had I of finding it. For, were my Arabic as fluent as my English, no policeman could direct me to so unconventional a quarter.

The train halted in a vast, domed station. A mighty press of humanity swept me through the waiting-rooms and out upon a brightly-lighted square. There the screaming throng of hackmen, porters, donkey boys, and hotel runners drove me to take refuge behind a sta-

tion pillar. I swung my knapsack over my shoulder and gazed, utterly undecided, across the human sea.

Suddenly a voice sounded above the roar:—"Heh! Landsmann, wohin?" I stared eagerly about me, for this simple greeting, properly accented, is the password of the German tramp wherever he wanders. Under a neighboring arc-light stood a young man of ruddy, sunburned countenance, in a stout, if somewhat ragged, suit and a cloth cap. At my sign of recognition, he dived into the crowd and fought his way to my side.

"Ah!" he shouted, in German, "I knew only one of the boys would blow in with a knapsack and a corduroy suit! Where are you turning up from? Just got in from Zagazig myself. Been down there grubbing up some cash. How long have you been away? Business any good down at the coast? Don't believe it is. Cairo's the place for easy winnings. Bet you blew in without a piastre? Give 'em the stony face on the train? I did, though a fellow down in Zagazig ticketed me. Gave me the cash, the wise one, and of course I planted it and stared them off."

Had I not already served an apprenticeship in German slang, I should have come off with a very indistinct notion of the recent activities of my new acquaintance. I broke in as soon as possible to assure him that I had never dared to hope that civilization was so up-to-date in Egypt that one could "beat his way" on the railroads, and to protest that I could doubly deny his charge of having "eingeblasen" without a piastre.

"It's my first trip to Cairo," I concluded. "I bought my own ticket—"

"What!" roared the German, "Ticketed yourself! Lieber Gott, aber du bist roh! Tick—But then," he continued, in a hushed voice, "now I think of it, so did I! Schafskopf, ja! I paid good money to come to Cairo the first time! Höllespein, what a greenhorn I was!"

As he talked, we had left behind the howling throng. No need to ask where he was leading me.

"There's an Asile in Cairo," he put in, "but you're too late to-night. You'll meet all die Kamaraden where we're going, for they're most of them ausgespielt with the churchman and can't talk the Asile tickets out of him."

We crossed a rectangular square where street cars clanged their way through a multitude, and turned down a street flanked by brightly-lighted shops.

A winged dahabiyeh of the Nile

Sais or carriage runners of Cairo, clearing the streets for their master

"It's the Moosky," said the German. "Good old lane. Many a piastre I've picked up in her."

He dodged into a side alley, jogged over a street, and entered the headquarters of "die Kameraden." It was a wine shop with connecting kitchen, on the lower floor of a four-story building; just such a rendezvous as one finds in Germany. A shuffling Jew was drawing beer and wine for several groups of noisy faranchees at the tables, to the accompaniment of a continual jabber in Yiddish to which the tipplers replied, now and then, in German. A long-unwashed female wandered in from the back room with a steaming plate of meat and potatoes.

"Der Jude has lodgings," said my companion, pointing at the ceiling. "Three small piastres. You can still eat a small piastre worth."

Great impression two and a half cents would have made on an all-day appetite! Almost before I realized it, I had called for a supper that took my last copper.

By the time I finished eating, the "comrades" were demanding the biography of "der Ankömmling." As all the party spoke German, I gave an abbreviated account of myself in that language.

"And what countryman are you?" asked a youth at a neighboring table.

"Ich bin Amerikaner."

The entire party, the Jew included, burst into uproarious laughter so suddenly that two black urchins, peering in upon us, took to their heels.

"Amerikaner! Ja! Ja!" shrieked the merrymakers, "Freilich! We are all Americans. But what are you when you tell the truth to your good comrades? Amerikaner! Ha! Ha!—"

The cane of the first speaker beat a tattoo on the table and the mirth subsided. Plainly, he was a man of authority in the gathering.

"Now, then," he cried, as though I were entitled by the rules of "the union" to enter two answers, "what country *are* you from?"

I repeated my first assertion.

"So you are an American, rheally?" he demanded, suddenly, in clear English, though with a marked accent.

A long reply in my own tongue upset his conviction that I should not be able to understand him. The others, however, grinned skeptically and fell to chattering again, glancing up from time to time to mutter, "Amerikaner! Ja, gewiss." I scraped up a half-pipe of tobacco from the corners of a pocket, and fell asleep over the fumes.

A whining voice sounded in my ear:—"H'raus, Hop! Will mich

einschliessen!" I opened my eyes to find the Jew bending over me. The room was nearly empty. Of the few "comrades" who remained one was the youth who had addressed me in English. I caught up my bundle and turned towards the door.

"Du bist, aber, ganz kaput?" demanded the young man, "have you no money?"

"No."

He rose and followed after me.

"If you are ein richtiger Amerikaner," he said, "I can show you where to pick up the price of a lodging."

I nodded. The youth called to the Hebrew to leave his door unlocked, and led the way down the Moosky, across the square, and along a street that flanked a wooded park.

"Esbekieh Gardens, those," he said. "I 'm taking you to the American Mission Hospital. There are eight American preachers there, but your best chance now is Reverend ——. He lives in the third story, first door to the right of the stairway. You will find him studying. He studies until two in the morning. Knock on the door once. He won't answer; but push it open and begin a hard-luck story right away. Now don't tell him that you 've just come to Egypt, nor that you 're a sailor; and, if he asks you if you speak German, say no. Tell him you are a civil engineer, or a plate-layer, or a mason, and that you 've just walked down from Central Africa — your clothes fit that — and that you could get no work there, or — or that you got sick; yes, that's better, for he 's an old wise one and knows there 's plenty of work up the river. Tell him you speak only English and that you are an American — that is if you *are* — and he will give you ten piastres. If you 're not sure you can talk English without a foreign accent — I can't tell whether you do or not — well, I would n't disturb the old man. He does n't like Germans."

The youth pointed out a door of the Mission and slipped into the blacker night of one of her pillars. I stepped inside, and, mounting to the first landing, sat down to think matters over. The night air of January was too cold to sleep out of doors even should I succeed in hiding where the patrol could not rout me out. But to come at midnight to disturb an aged missionary with a stereotyped tale of woe! Yet I knew the bitter hopelessness of looking for work after a night in the streets, and "a deep breath for breakfast." Work? Why, of course! Just the point! I must find work before I left Cairo; why could I not ask for a small loan and pay it back?

I continued up the stairs and knocked on the door that had been indicated. There was no response, but a tiny thread of light showed on the threshold. I stepped inside. In the far corner of a small room, a white-haired man closed, over a finger, the book he was reading, and turned the light of a student lamp full upon me. I began my story — not the one the German had plotted — and stated my case briefly. To my dismay, the word "borrow" fell flat.

"I rarely," said the old man, in a voice that would have chorded well with the last key of a piano, "I rarely give money to a man who has just come to the country. What business has he here without sufficient funds to establish himself? I have never given money to sailors. I know their ways too well. But after long months of daily visits from 'Americans' who speak English as if they had learned it in the slums of Berlin, I am glad to see a real American again; though sorry to find that he is without money, and still more so that he is a sailor. Here is a half-dollar"— handing me a ten-piastre piece —"I hope you will not drink quite all of it up. What state are you from?"

"Michigan. You understand I am only borrowing this until I can find work —"

"Young man," said the missionary, rising to his feet, "you already have the money — the amount I give, if I give at all. No additions to your tale will cause me to offer more. Why, then, attempt to raise false hopes within my breast? So you are from Michigan? I am from Pittsburg. Good night," and without giving me time for reply, he sat down and lost himself in the pages of his book.

"You were gone a long time," said the German, as I emerged from the doorway. "You could n't show *him* you were an American?"

I held out the coin in my hand.

"Ei! Gott!" cried my companion, "you got it? You are an American, then, a genuine American! It 's the test I always apply. He can tell an American at his first three words."

"But why did n't the crowd believe me?" I demanded.

"Ach!" burst out the youth, "Here in Cairo all the boys are Americans. We have Germans, Austrians, Hungarians, Poles, Norwegians, all sorts in the union, and everyone is an 'American'— except among the comrades. And not three of them ever saw the United States! It is because, of all the foreigners in Egypt, the Americans are the easiest and the most generous. Then you know what a bad reputation Germans have as beggars — all turning out on their Wan-

derjahre? The Germans here will help us. Yes! But how? By giving us a loaf of bread, or an old pair of shoes, or two piastres. Bah! But the Americans! They give pounds and whole suits, and they don't ask to hear the whole story of your past life. Americans? Why, there are dozens of American missionaries, judges, merchants, engineers, and ei! Gott! the tourists! There's your rich harvest, mein Freund! Why, a year I've been in Cairo learning English and picking the roosters. I've been up to see that greybeard four times! I dressed differently every time and practised every story for weeks until I got the accent right. Three times I got ten piastres, but the fourth he asked me questions, and, as I had n't practised the answers, I talked wild English and tangled myself up. Then I tried to get out of it by saying I was a Pennsylvania Dutchman. The old man started in on geography, and when I told him Pennsylvania was on the Gulf of Mexico he took his cane and chased me out. I've studied maps of the United States since then, though. He could n't catch me again. I know every city."

"Yes," he went on, as we turned into the now deserted Moosky, "all die Kunde try to be Americans. Aber Gott! The fools! They are too pig-headed ever to learn to talk English with an American accent. But you! Du glücklicher Kerl! You can live in Cairo until you grow a beard!"

I paid my lodging and followed the German up a narrow, winding stairway at the back of the shop. On the third story he pushed open a door much like the drop of a home-made rabbit trap, which gave admittance to a small room where four of six beds were already occupied. It needed only one long-drawn breath to prove that the "bedclothes" had not seen the washtub during several generations of "the boys," and that a can of insect powder could be used to great advantage. But he who is both penniless and hypercritical should remain at home. I took the bed beside that of the German and was soon asleep.

I awoke next morning to find my guide of the night before sitting on his bed at a dry-goods box before the single window, sipping black coffee from a tin can and eating a boiled egg and a slab of bread with one hand, and slowly penning a letter with the other. Having seen enough of him already to be convinced that he was a man of considerable education, I was surprised to find that he wielded a pen with such apparent difficulty.

"It's this English script that troubles me," he remarked, as if in

answer to my unexpressed question. "When you have written all your life in German script, it is hard to change."

"Then you 're writing English?" I cried.

He motioned to the letter before him as he swallowed the last of the coffee:—"Of course! A man can't eat if he doesn't work, There 's a New York millionaire just come to town. His name is Leigh Hunt, and I 'm writing to ask him for employment. He won't have any, of course, but he may send me a pound or two. I found it too hard to learn to speak English without a foreign accent, so I write instead."

He reached inside the box that served as table and tossed a dozen unstamped letters on my bed. All were addressed to Englishmen or Americans, among them people of international reputation.

"Read them according to the dates," said the youth, "and see if my English has n't improved. I copied them all and sent out the copies. All but two sent me money. One wrote me to come and see him today. The other I have n't heard from. You don't spell 'poverty' with a capital, do you?"

As he had spoken but one sentence in English since our meeting, I was surprised to note the fluent use of that language in his letters. None of them contained actual errors; and only a peculiar turning of a phrase, here and there, which a reader off his guard might easily have overlooked, betrayed the nationality of the writer. The stories they told were proof of an inventive imagination. A dozen "hard-luck tales," no one of which resembled the others, were all signed by different Americanized names, over different addresses. Here a youth from Baltimore, who had come to Egypt to open a store, had been robbed of all he possessed. There a civil engineer from New York had been forced to leave his work on the Berber-Suakim line and hasten down to Cairo to attend a sick wife and four small children. An aged stone mason, who had been injured while working on the barrage at Assuan, prayed for assistance to get back to his home in Cincinnati. A California prospector, just returned from an unsuccessful expedition into the Uganda protectorate, was lying ill and penniless in a miserable lodging-house.

Nor did the resourceful German confine himself to his own sex. The last letter was an appeal to a well-known American lady from a young girl who had come from Boston to act as stenographer to a tourist firm that had not materialized, and who sought assistance before starvation should drive her to ruin.

"How about this Boston story?" I asked.

"Best of the lot," replied the youth. "Sent me two pounds and a letter full of wise advice — for females."

"But did n't she ask to see you?"

"Bah! Most of them are too busy enjoying themselves. They prefer to send a bank note and forget the matter. Once in a while, one of them sends for me and, if I think he is not too clever — most millionaires are n't, you know — I go to see him, and generally get something on the Pennsylvania Dutch story."

"Where do you get the names?"

"Mostly from this," said the youth, reaching into the box once more and pulling out a Paris edition of the New York Herald. "If a millionaire starts for Egypt, or lands here, or catches cold, or bruises his toe, the Herald knows it — and never forgets the address. Then there is a society paper published here in Cairo —"

"Do you write German letters, too?"

"Not many. I used to, when I first came to Africa, but it 's a poor game. I began to study English when I came to Cairo, a year ago. My first letters must have been bad, for I got no answers. But they make me a living now, and an occasional spree."

"How much time does your letter writing take?"

"Four hours. I used to write at all times. Then I read of an author who wrote, rain or shine, from nine till one, and I find it a good idea. But to-day I 'm going to break the rule and show you where you can talk the pounds out of some rich Americans. Why," he cried, enthusiastically, "there has n't been a real American working the crowd since I 've been here. We 'll go into partnership. I know all the ropes and you can do the writing and interviewing; and, when we get Cairo pumped out, we 'll go up the Nile! I know every white man from here to Cape Town. I 've covered Africa from one end to the other — with an American partner, too. But he was a real Pennsylvania Dutchman and had a little accent. You 'll do much better. Africa 's all good; though Cairo 's the best, for there 's no vagrancy law here. We 'll make an easy living together or my name is n't Otto Pia."

"Ever think of going to America?"

"Never," he cried, "unless I was drunk. Never again a white man's country for me! Here, a white wanderer is an isolated case of misfortune, far from his native shore. At home, he is only a common tramp, one among thousands, and the man who would give him pounds

An Arab gardener on the estate of the American consul of Cairo, for whom I worked two weeks

Otto Pia, the German beggar-letter writer of Cairo

here would give him to the police there. That 's why few of die Kunde who come here — if they have brains enough to weave Märchen — ever go back. Do you know the secret of getting the sympathy of the rich? It 's to make them think we 're much worse off here than at home and to keep before them the idea that we cannot find work. For that reason I am a plate-layer in Cairo; for plate-layers are only needed far up the Nile. If I 'm up the Nile, I 'm a stenographer, or a waiter, or anything else that there is sure to be no work for. No, mein Freund, never your United States for me! And you 'll not go back either, when I 've showed you how easy it is to pick the roosters here. A tramp, you know, is like a prophet —' er gilt nichts in seinem Vaterlande.' "

" While you 're dressing and thinking up a few good Märchen," he went on, turning to his writing, " I 'll copy this letter. Then I 'll show you a few of the easiest marks."

I protested, however, that I had come to Cairo to work rather than to weave " fairy tales."

" Work? " he shouted, throwing aside his pen and springing to his feet, " A fellow who can write and talk English — and German, too, wants to *work* in Cairo? Why, mein lieber Kerl, you — you —" but the words stuck in his astonished throat.

I descended to the street and set out to visit such European contractors as I could locate. Long after dark, foot-sore and half-famished, covered with the dust of Cairo, I returned to the rendezvous and sat down at one of the tables. It was quite evident that die Kunde were neither foot-sore nor hungry, and their garments were as immaculate as secondhand garments can be made. The " wise ones " had loafed in the cafés and gardens, had written a letter or told a hard-luck story somewhere, and turned up at night with money enough to make merry through the whole evening. I, having tramped all day, from one address to another, turned up with — an appetite.

Otto Pia watched me, with a half-smile on his countenance, for some time after I had entered. Then he raised his cane and rapped on the table for silence.

" Ei! Gute Kamaraden! " he cried, " I have something to show you! Guk' mal! Here is a comrade who is an American — do you hear — a real American, not a patched-up one; and this real American — in Cairo — wants to *work!* "

" *Work?* " roared the chorus, " *Work* in Cairo — and a real American — Lieber Gott — Ist 's denn ein Esel? —"

I ate a meager supper and crawled away to bed. On the following day, I tramped even greater distances, and returned to the wine shop with only the price of a lodging left from the missionary's donation. Pia rose and took a seat beside me.

"Lot of work you found, eh?" he began. "Did n't any of them offer you money?"

"Most of them," I answered.

"And you did n't take it?" cried the German, "Why, you — you — you 're a disgrace to the union.

"I know how you feel though," he went on, "I was the same once. When I ran away from Germany — to escape the army — I would n't take a cent I had n't earned; and I starved a month in Pietermaritzburg, looking for work as you are here, before I got over my silly notions. Ach! I was an ass! I tell you it 's no use. You won't find work — especially in those rags. If you *will* work, let me take you where you can get some clothes first."

It was all too evident that he was right. Weather-beaten garments might pass muster in the wilderness of Palestine, but they were wholly out of place in the Paris of Africa. Twice that day, those who had refused me employment had offered to fit me out in their cast-off clothing. I concluded to profit by the experience of Pia.

The German abandoned the composition of pathetic short stories for an hour next morning to conduct me to the Secretary of the "Cairo Aid Society," a minister of the Church of England. Having pointed out the rectory, he left me without a sign of recognition, and marched unfalteringly down the street until he vanished behind the next row of houses. I mounted the broad steps and pressed the electric button. A jet-black Arab opened the door.

"I want to see the Reverend ——," I began.

"Very sorry, but Reverend —— not in," replied the servant, with a flash of ivory teeth in a very friendly smile.

"When will he be in?"

"Ah! Reverend —— gone to Iskanderia. No can tell. Come back maybe three day, maybe week," and the black face grew so sorrowful with pity that I hastened to leave, lest tears should begin to flow.

The German was awaiting me about four steps from the spot where he had disappeared at a brisk walk.

"You 're back soon," he said, "what luck?"

"He is not in."

"Not in? Höllespein! Certainly he's in! He never goes out before noon. Do you think I'm a bungler at my profession? I know the hours of every padre in Cairo, exactly, always! Who told you he was not in?"

"His servant."

"Was! Ein verdammter Schwartze? Herr Gott, aber du bist roh! Two days looking for work, and you don't know yet that every nigger servant will tell you his master is out? Not in!"— and he burst forth in his peculiarly silent, yet uproarious laughter.

A new light had broken in upon me. This, then, was the reason that of some forty white men whom I had called on for employment, a bare dozen had been at home? I left my companion to conquer his risibility alone, and, hastening back to the rectory, brought the servant to the door with a vicious ring.

"I've heard the Reverend —— *is* in. I want to see him."

There was no smile on the ebony face now. Even through the mask of black skin one could see anger welling up, the blind rage of the Mussulman against the hated unbeliever.

"I say Reverend —— not in!" snarled the servant, in hoarse sotto voce, "Go away."

With a string of English oaths that spoke better of his linguistic abilities than the influence of his master, he shut the door, quickly, yet noiselessly.

I pressed a finger against the electric button and kept it there. A quick muffled patter of footsteps sounded inside, a whispered imprecation came through the keyhole. My finger was growing numb. I relieved it with a thumb without breaking the circuit.

"Go away," growled the servant, fiercely, half opening the door, "go way, damn you, I cut your neck"— and his speech did not end there. I relieved my thumb with another finger. The murderous gleam in the Arab's eyes blazed forth more fiercely, then by a stern command of the will changed to an appeal.

"My God, stop!" he begged.

"Is your master in Iskanderia?"

A cry of rage trembled on his lips and was forced back.

"No," he snapped, throwing open the door.

I stepped inside and followed him along the hall. At the entrance to a well-stocked library he turned to me with a hoarse whisper:—

"Damn you! Why for you ring bell? I make you full of holes—"

A light step sounded in the passage and a grey-haired English lady stepped towards us.

"Yes, sir," continued the Arab, without a pause, "master see you right away, sir. Step inside, please, sir."

"Maghmoód," said the lady, "who was ringing the door bell so long?"

"Think button get stuck, lady, when gentleman push," replied the Arab, beaming upon me, "Shall I bring chocolate, lady?"

I sat down in the library and was joined almost at once by a sturdy, well-groomed old gentleman — a Briton by every token.

"Have trouble in getting in?" he demanded abruptly, before I had spoken.

"Why — er — the servant thought at first you were not in," I admitted.

"That rascal!" cried the minister, "I have dismissed ten servants since I became secretary of the Society, for no other fault. Maghmoód knows that it is my duty to keep open house during the morning; yet for some reason I cannot fathom, an Arab domestic cannot bear the thought of seeing his master give assistance of any kind to Europeans in unfortunate circumstances. It is a servant problem that has often been discussed among English residents; yet even the plumber and the carpenter continue to be shut out from houses where they have been sent for, unless they are well acquainted with native tricks.

"Now as to your case"— he needed no enlightenment as to my errand, evidently —"you need clothes, of course. Ordinarily, I have several suits on hand, sent by Englishmen in the city; but there has been such a run of German tramps that I have nothing left. I shall have something before long, surely. Meanwhile, I will give you a four-day ticket to the Asile Rudolph, our Society building. What is your trade?"

"I have worked as carpenter, mason, blacksmith, stevedore—"

"Good! Good!" said the rector. "You should find work easily. If you don't, come back when your ticket runs out. I shall call Maghmoód up on the carpet. Good-day, my man."

I hastened to join the German.

"That's good as a beginning," he said, as I displayed the ticket, "It shows you are on the trail, and you can work him for tickets for two or three weeks. But I must get back to my desk. Follow this

An Arab café in Old Cairo

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avenue to the parade grounds; where you saw the Khedive's gu drilling, you know. The Asile is close by."

In a side street in which sprawled and squalled native infants uncountable, I tugged at a bell rope protruding from a stern brick wall, and was admitted by a barelegged Arab to the courtyard of the Asile Rudolph. The superintendent, seated before the "office," called for my ticket. He was a sprightly Englishman, in the autumn of life, long a captain in the Black Sea service, and still known to all as "Cap Stevenson." Around two sides of the court were the kitchen and sleeping-rooms of the male inmates. Opposite the entrance towered the Women's Asile, a blank wall except for one window opening, through which the English matron thrust her head at frequent intervals to berate the captain, in a caustic falsetto, for the hilarity of his charges.

Among my new companions, some two score of ragged, care-free fellows who had already gathered around the tables in the open air dining-room, the German vagabond predominated. The French, Italian, and Greek tongues were frequently heard, there were two or three castaways from the British Isles; but as long as I remained at the Asile I was the sole representative of the western hemisphere.

An Arab servant bawled out from the depths of the kitchen, and, as we filed by the door, handed each of us a bowl of steaming soup and an ample slab of bread. There was no French parsimoniousness about the Asile Rudolph. Each bowl held a liberal quart — of something more than discolored dishwater, too — and down at the bottom were three cubes of meat. Never did a bowl appear during all the days that I wondered at the audacity of the society's butcher without exactly three such cubes, of exactly the same size. To my companions they were the daintiest of morsels. The best-dressed vagabond never dreamed of tasting his soup until he had fished out this basic flesh and laid it on the table before him to gloat over until he had finished his liquid refreshment. Once gorged with soup, he sliced the cubes carefully, dipped the strips in rock salt, and slowly munched them, one by one, in his eyes the far-away look of keen enjoyment. As for myself, when I attempted to cut up my first cube, it bounded away over my head and before I could turn around to follow its flight had disappeared into the pocket of some quicker-witted guest. I dismembered the second morsel with the assistance of a fellow-boarder, and inflicted upon my teeth a piece of convenient size. An hour later, I deposited the still undamaged delicacy outside a factory

at the further end of the city. When I turned out to renew my search it was gone.

Thoughtful guests of the Society made provision during the noon-hour of plenty for the twenty-four hours to come; for morning and evening brought only coffee or tea, and bread. There was, however, something more than bed and board in store for the lucky possessor of one of the Reverend ——'s tickets — a shower bath! It was closed during the day, but I was by no means the last to finish the evening meal, and, once inside the wooden closet, it was only the protest that the stream could be used to even better advantage among my companions that saved me from a watery grave.

I began my fourth day's search by applying at the office of the chief owners of modern Egypt — Thomas Cook and Son. There is hardly a walk in life, from the architect to the donkey-boy, that is not represented among the employees of that great tourist agency. Somewhere, in those cosmopolitan ranks, I might find my place. I proffered my services to the company as a sailor on their Nile steamers, as an unskilled workman in any of their enterprises, as a man with a trade in the Bulak factory where their floating palaces are constructed. Nothing came of it. In desperation, I struck out in a struggle directly against the economic law of labor, and, instead of dropping lower with each refusal, sought to climb higher.

It was true, admitted the manager, that the company was in need of clerks. It was still more in need of interpreters, and, to all appearance, I was qualified for either position. "But — but — I 'm sorry, old chap," and he looked sternly at my heelless slippers and ragged corduroys, "but really, you won't do, don't you know. I can give you a note to a well-known contractor —"

I accepted it with pleasure; for the name of Cook and Son, embossed at the top of a letter of introduction, has great weight in Egypt. The contractor to whom the note was addressed gave me — another. The addressee of the second gave me a third. Two, three, four days, I spent in delivering notes to the European residents of Cairo and waging battle against her Islamite servant body. Night after night I returned to the Asile with one stereotyped answer in my head: —

"I really have n't anything I can put you at now. I 'll give you a letter to ——. Are you on the rocks? Well, here, perhaps this dollar will help you out. You don't want it? Well, I 'll keep you in mind."

The employers were divided into two classes: those who offered money as the easiest means of getting rid of an unwelcome visitor, and

those who had been "on the rocks" themselves and protested against my refusal to accept alms in the words of the water-works superintendent: —"Take it, man, there is no harder work than looking for work; why not be paid for it?" The strangest fact of all, one that impresses itself on the out-of-work the world over, was the conviction of each that I should easily find employment. "Why, to be sure," exclaimed a superintendent of shops in Bulak, "*we* have n't anything to offer just now; but a man with your list of trades will certainly find work in Cairo in a few hours, without the slightest trouble." It would have been hard to convince him that I had heard that same statement in a half-dozen languages a score of times a day for a week past. Gradually the assertion of "the comrades," that he who would work in the Egyptian capital was an ass, took on new force.

Rich or penniless, however, he who does not enjoy the winter season in Cairo must be either an invalid, a prisoner, or an incurable pessimist. Here one does not need to add to every projected plan, "weather permitting." The sojourner in the land of Egypt knows, as he goes to his rest at night, that, whatever misfortune to-morrow may bring, it will be lightened by joyous sunshine. Nor need the sans-sous lack entertainment in this city of the Nile. One had but to stroll to the vicinity of the Esbekieh Gardens to hear a band concert, to see some quaint native performance, or to find some excitement afoot. At all hours of the day those fortunate beings whose names graced the pages of Pia's society papers displayed their charms to the watching throng. At frequent intervals the Khedive and his body-guard thundered by. Now and then the bellow of Cairo's champion saïs heralded the approach of the Khedive's master, Lord Cromer. Nay, entertainment there was never lacking — merely food.

When my ticket ran out on the morning of the fourth day, I did not apply at once for another. The evening before, the Greek proprietor of a famous cigarette factory had promised me a position, had even explained to me my probable duties as general porter in the establishment. But when I had inveigled my way into the inner sanctum for the second time, it was only to learn that a compatriot of the proprietor had applied earlier in the morning, and was already at work. Not to be outdone by his fellow-faranchees, the Greek offered me — a letter of introduction.

The hour of public audiences at the rectory was passed. The day, moreover, was Saturday, a half-holiday among contractors. In the hope of earning a night's lodging by some errand, I joined the howling

mob of guides, interpreters, street-hawkers, and fakirs, before Shepherd's Hotel. I was the sole Frank in the gathering. Die Kameraden, whatever their nationality, would have been transfixed with horror had they seen one of their own patrician class competing with "niggers" for employment. As a last resort, had "the business" been utterly outrooted in Cairo, the members of "the union" might have consented to busy themselves with some genteel occupation; but had gaunt starvation squatted on his haunches in their path, they would never have stooped to the work of natives.

My presence was soon noised through all the screaming multitude, and I was cleverly "pocketed" by a dozen snake swallowers and sword jugglers, and gradually forced towards the outskirts of the crowd. When I resorted to force and beat my way to the front rank, I was little better off than before. For two hours I watched the natives about me selling, begging, running errands, or marching away to guide a tourist party through the city; without once seeing a beckoning finger in answer to my own offers of service. At frequent intervals, a lady appeared on the hotel piazza, ran her eyes slowly over the front ranks, stared at me a moment, and, summoning some one-eyed rascal beside me, sent him across the city with a perfumed note. The ladies, certainly, were not to be blamed. It was so much more romantic; there was so much more local color in one's doings, don't you know, if one's errands were run by a Cairene in flowing robes, rather than by a tramp such as one could see at home any day in St. Charles or Madison Square! What if one paid an exorbitant price for such services? It was to a picturesque figure, don't you know, whose English was excruciatingly funny.

It is half disgusting, half pathetic, this ebb and flow of the population of Egypt at the crook of a tourist finger. From the door, on which every eye was fixed, emerged the blatant figure of a pompous pork-packer, or the half-baked offspring of a self-made ancestry. With a wild howl the mob rose en masse and surged forward, threatening to break my ribs against the foot of the piazza. If the pork packer scowled, the throng fell back like a receding tide. If the half-baked offspring raised an eyebrow, the multitude swept on, tossing me far up the steps into the arms of "buttons," on guard against the besiegers below.

He was a coarse-grained cockney, this "buttons," and, in carrying out his orders to repel boarders, he was neither a respecter of persons nor of his mother tongue. A score of times I was pushed down the

An abandoned mosque outside the walls of Cairo, and a caravan off for Suez across the desert

steps I had not chosen to ascend, with a violence and profanity out of all keeping with racial brotherhood.

But every dog has his day. A sallow youth issued from the hotel and called for a man to carry a letter. "Buttons" was already raising a hand to point out a pock-marked Arab who had departed on four commissions since my arrival, when the tidal wave of humanity set me on the piazza. I shouted to the sallow youth just as "buttons" fell upon me. The youth nodded. It was a long-sought opportunity. I reversed rôles with the cockney and landed him in a picturesque spread-eagle on the heads of the backsheesh-seeking multitude. Had he not been wont to use his influence in favor of a very limited number of the throng, he would have been more immaculate in appearance, when he was dug out by his pock-marked confederate and restored to his coign of vantage. Meanwhile I had received the letter and a five piastre piece in payment, and had departed on my errand.

The coin paid my evening meal and a lodging for two nights in "the union," and left me coppers enough for a native breakfast. Sunday was no time either to "forage," or to visit rectors of the church of England. In company with Pia, who would under no circumstances use his inventive pen on the Sabbath, I visited those few corners of Cairo to which my search had not yet led me; the Mohammedan University of El Azkar, the citadel, and the ruined mosques beyond the walls.

When all other resources fail him, the Anglo-Saxon wanderer has one unfailing friend in the East — Tommy Atkins. However penniless and forlorn he may be, the glimpse of a red jacket and a monkey cap on a lithe, erect figure, hurrying through the foreign throng, is certain to give him new heart. Thomas has become a familiar sight in Cairo since the days of the Arabi rebellion. Down by the Kasr-el-Nil bridge, out in the shadows of the pencil-like minarets of Mohammed Ali's mosque, in parade grounds scattered through the city, he may be found any afternoon perspiringly chasing a football or setting up his wickets in the screaming sunlight, to the astonishment and delight of a never-failing audience of apathetic natives. He does n't pose as a philanthropist — simple T. Atkins — nor as a man of iron-bound morality — rather prides himself, in fact, on his incorrigible wickedness. But the case has yet to be recorded in which he has not given up his last shilling more whole heartedly than the smug tourist would part with his cigar band.

Thomas, however, has no overwhelming love for "furriners —

Dutchmen, dagoes, and such like." It would be out of keeping with his profession. That was why Pia, after pointing out to me the least public entrance to the cavalry barracks, on this Sunday noon, strolled on down the street. The officers' dinner was already steaming when I was welcomed by the six privates of that day's mess squad. By the time it had been served, I was lending the cooks able assistance in disposing of the plentiful remnants, amid the stories and laughter of a redcoats' messroom. Even the bulging pockets with which I departed were less cheering than the last bellow from the barrack's kitchen: — " Drop in to mess any day, Yank, till you land something. No bloody need to let your belly cave in while there's a khaki suit in Cairo."

I was admitted to the library of the Reverend —— the following morning without so much as a hinted challenge from Maghmoód. The good rector was more distressed than surprised that I had not yet found work.

" The difficulty is right here," he cried, as he made out a second Asile ticket. " No one will hire you in those rags, if you have a dozen trades. I must pick you up something that looks less disreputable. Come on Wednesday. I shall surely have something to offer."

I fished out the note of the Greek cigarette maker and bore greetings from one European resident to another for two days more. On the third, I returned to the rectory and received a bundle of astonishing bulk.

" These things may not all fit you," said the rector, " but it is all we have been able to collect."

Red-eyed with hope, I hurried back to the Asile and opened the package. Just what I should have represented in the garments that came to view I have not yet concluded. On top was a pair of trousers, in excellent condition, but of that screaming pattern of unabashed checks in which our cartoonists are accustomed to garb bookmakers and Tammany politicians. In texture, they were just the thing — for Arctic explorers, and they resigned in despair some four inches above my Nazarene slippers. Next came a white shirt, with a mighty expanse of board-like bosom — and without a single button; then the low-cut vest of a dress suit, and, lastly, a minister's long frock coat, with wide, silk-faced lapels.

The first shock over, I bore the treasure back to the rectory. But the good padre refused to unburden me. " Oh, I don't want them around the house! " he protested, " If you can't wear them, sell them." Even the proprietor of " the union," however, refused to come to my

rescue. With much cajoling, I lured an unsophisticated newcomer at the Asile inside the vest and trousers, and intrusted the other garments to the safe-keeping of Cap Stevenson.

The endless stream of notes, having its source at the office of Cook and Son, flowed on unchecked. If my object had been merely to gain intimate acquaintance with the Cairenes of all classes, I could not have chosen a better method. No tourist, with his howling bodyguard of guides and dragomans, ever peeped into half the strange corners to which my wanderings led me. My command of Arabic, too, increased by leaps and bounds; for the necessity of giving expression of my innermost thoughts to the servant body of Cairo required an ever-increasing vocabulary.

The two-hundredth letter of introduction — if my count be not at fault — took me to that ultra-fashionable world across the Nile. The director of the Jockey Club read the latest epistle carefully, and, with sportsman-like fairness, gave me another. The delivery thereof required my presence in the great Gezireh Hotel. For once I was not even challenged by the army of servants; the very audacity of my entrance into those Elysian Fields left the astonished domestics standing in petrified rows behind me. The superintendent was most kind. He gave me, even without the asking, a letter of introduction! The curse of Cain on him who invented the written character! My entire Cairene experience had been bounded by this endless chain of notes through all the cycle of her cosmopolitan inhabitants.

The new missive carried me back to Shepherd's Hotel, and for once I escaped employment by a hair's breadth. The portly Swiss manager was inclined to overlook the shortcomings in my attire. He needed a cellar boy, could use another porter, or "you may do as a bell-boy," he mused, with half-closed eyes, "if —"

What vision was this? Might I aspire even to displace mine ancient enemy, in all the splendor of two close rows of bright, brass buttons, and pace majestically back and forth with the sang-froid of a lion tamer, above the common horde I had so lately quitted? What folly to keep silent concerning those acquirements that especially fitted me to serve a cosmopolitan clientèle, while fickle fortune was holding forth this golden prize! I broke in upon the manager's brown study with a deluge of German. He opened wide his eyes. I addressed him in French. He sputtered with astonishment. I continued in Italian. He waved his hands above his head like a swimmer about to go down for the third time. I added a savoring of Spanish

and Arabic for good measure, and he clutched weakly at a hotel pillar.

Gradually, strength returned to his trembling limbs. He rubbed his astonished gorge with a ham-like hand and dislodged an imprisoned shriek: —"Aber, mein lieber Kerl! Speaking all those langvages and out of a job — and in rhags! Why — you — you — you must haf been up to some crhooked business, yes?" He glanced fearfully about him at the silver ornaments of the office. "I — I — I am very sorry, we haf not now a single vacancy. But — but you vill not haf the least trouble — mit so viel' Sprachen — in getting a position, not the slightest! I gif you a note — to Cook and Son."

I wandered sadly away across the city and stumbled upon the American legation. Long battle won me admittance to the office of the secretary. Beyond that I could not force my way. The secretary heard my case, and, eager to be off to some afternoon function, thrust an official sheet into his typewriter and set forth in a "to-whom-it-may-concern" the half-dozen trades I mentioned; and several others to which I had never aspired. A second sheet he ruined with a score of addresses, and bade me be gone. If there was any corner of Cairo from Heliopolis to Masr el Attika which I had not already visited, these documents soon repaired the oversight. Two days the new task required, and it brought no reward, save one. The head of the Egyptian railway system promised me a pass to the coast when I chose to leave the country. I did not choose at once, and, returning on the third day to the legation, fought my way into the sanctum of the consul-general himself.

"If you are looking for work of a specific character," said that gentleman, "I can do no more than has already been done — give you more addresses. If you are merely looking for *work*, I can give you employment at once."

I pleaded indifference to qualifying adjectives.

The consul chose a card from his case, turned it over, and wrote on the back: —"Tom; — Let Franck do it."

"Take this," he said, "to my residence; it is opposite that of Lord Cromer, near the Nile, and give it to my butler."

"Tom," the commander-in-chief of the servant body of a vast establishment, proved to be a young American of the pleasantest type. I came upon him dancing blindly around the ballroom of Mr. Morgan's residence, and shouting himself hoarse with the Arabic variation of "Get a move on!" The consul, it transpired, was to give a dinner,

with dancing, to the lights of society wintering in the city. In the two days that remained before the eventful evening the ballroom floor must be properly waxed. Twelve native workmen, lured thither by the extraordinary wage of twenty-five cents a day, had been holding down the aforementioned floor since early morning. About them was spread powdered wax. In their hands were long bottles. Above them towered the dancing butler.

"Put some strength into it," he bellowed, by way of variation, as I stepped across the room towards him. For the three succeeding strokes, the dozen bottles, moving in unison, to the chant of a thirteenth "workman" who had been hired to squat in a far corner and furnish vocal inspiration, nearly crushed the powdered wax under them. But this unseemly display of energy was of short duration.

I delivered the cabalistic message. The Arabs bounded half across the room at sound of the shriek emitted by its addressee:—"I'll fire 'em!" bellowed Tom. "I'll fire 'em *now*. An American? I'm delighted, old man! Get on the job while I kick these niggers down the stairs. Had any experience at this game?"

I recalled a far-off college gymnasium, and nodded.

"Take you're own gait, only so you get it done," cried the butler, charging the fleeing Arabs.

I discarded the bottle process and rigged up an apparatus after the fashion of a handled holly-stone. By evening, the polishing was half completed. When I turned my attention to the dust-streaked windows, late the next afternoon, the ballroom floor was in a condition that boded ill for any but sure-footed dancers. The outbreak of festivities found me general assistant to the culinary department, separated only by a Japanese screen from the contrasting class of society; represented by such guests as Lord Cromer and his youthful Lady, the ex-Empress Eugenie, the Crown Prince of Sweden, and the brother of the Khedive. Deeply did I regret the lack of inventiveness that forced me to report to the sleepless inmates of the Asile to which Cap Stevenson admitted me long after closing hours, that the conversation of so distinguished a gathering had been commonplace, the dancing unanimated, and the flirting unseemly.

By arrangement with Tom, I continued to "do it" long after the day of the ball. The fare at the servants' table was beyond criticism, but I declined a blanket and a straw-strewn stall in the consul's stable, and retained my cot at the Asile at a daily cost of two piastres. As my earnings grew, I repaired, one night, to the American

Mission Hospital, mounted to the third story, knocked on the first door to the right, pushed it open, and astonished an aged missionary from Pittsburg out of a night's labor. One idle hour, too, I examined again the garments I had left with Cap Stevenson and found them less useless than I had once imagined. The shirt, being tied together, front and back, with string, awoke the envy of all the "comrades." For the bosom was of many layers, and, as each one became soiled, I had but to strip it off, and behold! — a clean shirt. When I had laid the bundle away again, it contained only the minister's frock coat.

Cap Stevenson had made a scientific study of the genus vagabundus that enabled him to gauge with surprising precision the demands that would be made on the Asile from day to day. There fell into my hands, one evening, a Cairo newspaper, containing the following item: —

SUEZ, *February 2d,* 1905.

The French troop-ship ———, outward bound to Madagascar with five hundred recruits, reports that while midway between Port Saïd and Ismaïlia, in her passage of the canal, five recruits who had been standing at the rail suddenly sprang overboard and swam for the shore. One was carried under and crushed by the ship's screw. The others landed and were last seen hurrying away into the desert. All concerned were Germans.

I entered the office to point out the item to the superintendent.

"Aye," said Cap, "I 've seen it. That 's common enough. They 'll be here for dinner day after to-morrow."

They arrived exactly at the hour named, the four of them, weather-beaten and bedraggled from their swim and the tramp across the desert, but supplied with the Reverend ——'s tickets. Two of the quartet were very engaging fellows with whom I was soon on intimate terms. One of this pair had spent some months in Egypt years before, after using the same means to make the passage from Europe.

On the Friday after their arrival, this man of experience met me at the gate of the Asile as I returned from my day's labor.

"Heh! Amerikaner," he began, "do you get a half holiday to-morrow?"

"Sure," I answered.

"I 'm going to take Hans out for a moonlight view of the Pyramids. It 's full moon and all the tourist companies are sending out tally-ho parties. Want to go along?"

I did, of course. The next afternoon I left the Asile in company with the pair. At the door of the office, I halted to pay my night's lodging.

Spinners in the sun outside the walls of Cairo

Guests of the Asile Rudolph, Cairo. François, champion beggar, in the center, in the cape he wore as part of his "system"

"Never mind that," said Adolph, the man of experience, "we 'll sleep out there."

"Eh?" cried Hans and I.

Adolph pushed open the outer gate, and we followed.

"Suppose you 'll pay our lodging at the Mena House?" grinned Hans, as we crossed the Kasr-el-Nil bridge.

"Don't worry," replied Adolph.

We pushed through the throng of donkey boys beyond the bridge and, ignoring the electric line that connects Cairo with the pyramids of Gizeh, covered the eight miles on foot. Darkness fell soon after our arrival, and with it rose an unveiled moon. The tourists were out in force. Adolph led the way in and out among the ancient monuments and pointed out the most charming views with the discernment of an antiquarian. The desert night soon turned cold. The tourist parties strolled away to the great hotel below the hill, and Hans fell to shivering.

"Where 's this fine lodging you 're telling about?" he chattered.

"Komm' mal her," said Adolph.

He picked his way over the tumbled blocks towards the third pyramid, climbed a few feet up its northern face, and disappeared in a black hole. We followed, and, doubled up like balls, slid down, down, down a sharply inclined tunnel, some three feet square, into utter darkness. As our feet touched a stone floor, Adolph struck a match. The flame showed two small vaults and several huge stone sarcophaghi.

"Beds waiting for us, you see?" said Adolph. "Probably you 've chatted with the fellows who used to sleep here? They 're in the British Museum, in London."

He dropped the match and climbed into one of the coffins. I chose another and found it as comfortable as a stone bed can be, though a bit short. Our sleeping chamber was warm, somewhat too warm in fact, and Hans, given to snoring, awoke echoes that resounded through the vaults like the beating of forty drums. But the night passed quickly, and, when our sense of time told us that morning had come, we crawled upward on hands and knees through the tunnel and out into a sunlight that left us blinking painfully for several moments.

A throng of tourists and Arabian rascals was surging about the monuments. A quartet of khaki-clad Britishers kicked their heels on the forehead of the Sphinx, puffing at their pipes as they exchanged the latest garrison jokes. We fought our way through the clinging

Arabs, climbed to the summit of the pyramid of Cheops, took in the regulation "sights," and strolled back to Cairo.

Many a strange bit of human driftwood floated ashore in the Asile Rudolph, but their stories would take too long in the telling. Yet no account of that winter season in Cairo would be complete without mention of "François." François was, of course, a Frenchman, a Parisian, in fact, and, contrary to the usual rule, it was he, and not a German, who won and still holds the mendicant championship of Egypt. To all who spoke French, he was known as the most loquacious and jolly lodger at the Asile. The Reverend —— had long since turned him away from the door of the rectory; but François would not be driven from his accustomed bed, and paid his two piastres nightly.

As a young man the Frenchman had worked faithfully at his trade; he admitted it with shame. Three years in the army, however, had awakened within him an uncontrollable Wanderlust, and during the twenty-three years since his discharge, he had tramped through every country of Europe. He was a man of meager education and by no means the native ability of Pia and many of the German colony. But long years before his arrival in Egypt, he had evolved "un système" to which his fame as a mendicant was due. The first part of this system concerned his personal appearance. He was pale of complexion, though in reality very robust, and he had trained his shoulders into a droop that suggested the last stages of consumption. His garb, in general, was that of a French workman, but over this he wore a cloak with a long cape that gave him an aspect not unlike a monk, and, combined with his drooping shoulders and sallow, long-drawn face, created a figure so forlorn as to attract attention in any clime. Nothing, François asserted, had contributed so much to his success as this cloak. Rain or shine, from the Highlands of Scotland to the shores of the Black Sea, in the depth of winter or in midsummer, he had clung to this garb for twenty years, replacing in that time a dozen cloaks by others of identical design. Even in Egypt he refused to appear in public without this superfluous outer garment, and, though the African sun had turned the threadbare cape almost as yellow as the desert sands, he was not to be separated from it until he had picked up another in some charitable institution of the city.

The second part of François's system was extremely simple. The method which Pia so successfully manipulated was too complicated for

a man of little schooling; yet François rarely made a verbal appeal for alms. On a score of cards, which he carried ever ready in a pocket of his cloak, was written in as many languages this petition: —

"I am ill and in misery. Please help me."

The French card was his own production. The others he had collected from time to time as he made friends in the various countries he had visited. For, with all his wanderings, François knew hardly a word of any language but his own.

I set out with the French champion, one Sunday afternoon, to visit the mosque of Sultan Hassan. Not far from the Asile gate, he caught sight of a well-dressed man, whose appearance stamped him as a German. François shuffled his cards with a hasty hand, chose the one in the corner of which was written, in tiny letters, the word "allemand," and set off at a trot. Arrived within a few paces of his intended victim, he fell into a measured tread, thrust out the card, and waited with sorrowful face and hanging head. The German returned the card with a five-piastre piece.

Cairo is nothing if not cosmopolitan, and it is doubtful if every one of the cards did not make its appearance at least once during the afternoon. American tourists, English officers, French entrepreneurs, Greek priests, Italian merchants, Turkish clerks, Indian travelers, even the Arab scribes sitting imperturbable beside their umbrella-shaded stands,—all had the misery of François called to their attention. Whether it was out of gratitude for a sight of the familiar words of his native tongue, or out of pity for the abject creature who coughed so distressingly and pointed to his ears like a deaf mute whenever a question was put to him, rare was the man who did not give something. François collected more than a hundred piastres during that single promenade. Yet before we set out he had called me aside and drawn from an inner pocket a purse that contained twenty-six English sovereigns in gold!

But it was his method of dispensing his income that made the Frenchman an enigma to his confidants. François neither drank nor smoked; he rarely, if ever, indulged even in the mildest dissipation. Not far from the Asile, he stopped at a café for his petit déjeuner of chocolate and rolls and his morning paper; and, had he met the Khedive himself out for a stroll, François would not have appealed to him before that breakfast was over. He was strictly a union man, was François, in his hours of labor.

But his daily expenditures were for bed and breakfast only. There

were scores of French chefs in Cairo, ever ready to welcome whomever knew the kitchen door and the language of the cuisine. If his shoes wore out, there were several French shops in the vicinity of the Esbekieh Gardens. If he were in need of nothing more costly than a bar of soap, François begged one of the first druggist he came upon. The sovereigns which cosmopolitan Cairo thrust upon him were spent almost entirely for souvenirs for his relatives in Paris. The most costly albums of Cairene views, fine brass ware, dainty ornaments of native manufacturer were packed in the bazaars and shipped away to those fortunate brothers, sisters, and cousins of François in the French capital. Only once in twenty-three years had he visited them, but few were the towns and cities of all Europe the arts and manufactures of which were not represented in that Parisian household. As a supplement to his gifts, there came semi-annually a letter from François, announcing some new success in his career as a traveling salesman.

An Arab market-day at the village of Gizeh

CHAPTER X

THE LAND OF THE NILE

ONE fine morning, some two weeks after my introduction to Tom, I vacated my post in the consul's household and set about laying plans for a journey up the Nile. My wages had not been reckoned on the American scale, but for all that I was a man of comparative affluence when I turned off the Moosky for my last visit to the headquarters of "the union."

The German is nothing if not systematic, be he prime minister or errant adventurer. The Teutonic tramp does not wander at random through lands of which his knowledge is chaotic or nil. He profits by the experience of his fellow-ramblers. If he covers an unknown route, he returns with a notebook full of information for his fellows. Thanks to this method, the German beggar colony of Cairo had long contained a bureau of information to which many a vagabond of other nationality bewailed his linguistic inability to gain access. The archives of "the union" were particularly rich in Egyptian lore. For there is but one route in Egypt. He who has once journeyed up or down the Nile, with open eyes, is an authority on the whole country.

Several of die Kunde were romping about on as many vermin colonies when I entered, on this February afternoon, the room in which Pia was accustomed to pen his eleemosynary masterpieces. It was an informal and chance gathering that included nearly every authority in "the union" on the territory beyond the Tombs of the Mamelukes. My projected journey awakened great interest in all the group.

"As for myself," said Pia, "I can't see why you go. Most of the comrades do, of course, but they will make the journey worth while. As for a man who will only work! Pah! You will starve and die in the sands up there."

The emaciated door was kicked open and a burly young man entered and threw himself across the foot of one of the cots.

"Ah, now," Pia went on, "there is Heinrich. He is going up the Nile too, in a few days. He 's been up six times already. Why don't

you go up with him? He knows all the ropes and you, being an American —"

"Was!" roared the newcomer, "Ein Amerikaner? Going up the river? Shake, mein lieber! We go up together! We'll do more business —"

"But if I go up, I'll spend considerable time sight-seeing —"

"Sights? There's something I never could understand. All the tourists go up to see *sights!* Thank the Lord they do; what would the business be without them? But what the devil do they see? Hundreds of miles of dry, choking sand, with nothing but dirty Nile water to wash it off your face and out of your throat! A lot of smashed-up rocks, covered with pictures of hens and roosters, all red hot under the cursed sun that never stops blazing. And besides that, niggers — millions of dirty niggers, blind niggers, and half-blind niggers who do nothing but crawl around after decent white men and beg. That's all there is in Egypt, if you go up the Nile, till you come to the sudd-fields of Uganda."

"Well what do you go up for?" I asked. Even this brief acquaintance with Heinrich convinced me that he would die the death of a martyr rather than disgrace die Kamaraden by working.

"What for? Why so I won't starve, to be sure. If I could wiggle the feather and paint like Otto there, I'd see hell freeze over before I'd move a mile south of Cairo. But I can't, so I must go over the soft-hearted ones again. I've worked 'em pretty hard the last two years, but the game's good yet. I've grown this beard since the last trip, and got a new story all bolstered up. I'm a civil engineer this time, with a wife and three children here in Cairo. Going up, I'll be making for the Berber-Suakim line, after spending all I had on the kid's doctor bills. Coming down, it's the fever story — that's always good — or my wife is dying and, if we can get her back to Hamburg before she croaks, she'll get an inheritance her uncle just left her. Pretty neat that, eh?" grinned Heinrich, turning to his admiring mates. "Thought that out one night when I could n't sleep. Brand new, is n't it? Aber, Gott, mein lieber," he addressed me once more, "if you'll only come along! I can't speak English, and most of the soft ones know my face. But I'll point out everyone of them from here to Assuan. I'll lay low and we'll share even."

I declined to enter into an offensive alliance against the "soft ones," however, and turned to Pia for the information which he had once promised to give me. While he talked, every other lounger in the room

A woman of Alexandria, Egypt, carrying two bushels of oranges. Even barefooted market-women wear the veil required by the Koran

On the top of the largest pyramid. From the ground it looks as sharply pointed as the others

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added his voice from time to time; and from deep wells of experience I gleaned a long list of names, flanked by biographical details, as we journeyed mentally up the river. This vagabond's edition of "Who's Who in Egypt" completed, Pia laid down several rules of the road.

"I don't see why you go up," he began. "You can make a fortune right here. If you are determined to go, get a good story and always stick to it, changing it enough to fit different cases. Some, it will pay you to ask for work — you know the breed; others, just ask for money. Take anything they give you. You can sell it if you don't want it. Always see the big men long before train time. They will often offer to buy you a ticket to wherever you want to go; and, if the train is soon due, they may go to the station and buy it. But if you touch them long before train time, they may give you the money and go back to business. Then you can spend a couple of piastres to the next station and work that the same way. The sugar factories are all good — they 'll even give you work, perhaps, if you are fool enough to take it. Always hit the young Englishmen. They 're almost all of them adventurers with nothing much to do with their money. When you catch a missionary, make him take up a collection for you among the native Christians. He must do it, by the rules of the Board of Missions.

"The ticket game is always best. If you get three or four men in each town to give you the price to Assiut or Assuan, you can make the trip in a month and pick up good money. When you get a lot of silver, change it at any of Cook's offices into gold sovereigns and sew them up in your clothes. Be sure not to let any money rattle when you 're spinning a hard-luck yarn. And don't be a fool, like some of the comrades who have gone up for one trip. They pump a town dry, and, not satisfied to wait until they hit Cairo again, go on a blow-out and lie around drunk for a week where those who gave them ticket money can see them. That queers the burg for the next six months. Of course you know enough to be of the same church, and very pious, when you hit a missionary, and to be from the same state when you touch an American? Above all never let a boat load of tourists go by without touching them. Always go down to the dock and make enough noise so that they all hear you. Some of the boys who are good at it throw a fit when they get in a crowd of rich ones. But as you talk English, a good tale of woe will do as well. When you get well up the river, and a good tan, and a couple of weeks' beard, spring the old yarn of 'lost my job and must get down to Cairo.'

And always wait for a train. You 'll miss the whole game if you walk; and you 'll die of sunstroke, besides."

In the face of Pia's warning, I left Cairo on foot the next morning, and, crossing the Nile, turned southward along a ridge of shifting sand beyond the village of Gizeh. Along an irrigating ditch, that flanked the ridge, scores of *shadufs,* those human paradigms of perpetual motion, were ceaselessly dipping, dipping, the water that gives life to the fields of Egypt. Between the canal and the sparkling Nile, groups of fellahs, deaf to the blatant sunshine, set out sugar cane or clawed the soil of the arid plain. On the desert wind rode the never-ceasing squawk of the *sakka,* or Egyptian water-wheel.

Beyond the pyramids of Sakkara, I sought shelter in the palm groves that cover the site of ancient Memphis, and took my siesta on the recumbent statue of Rameses. A backsheesh-thirsty village rose up to cut off my return to the sandy road, and forced me to run a gauntlet of out-stretched hands. 'Tis the national anthem of Egypt, this cry of backsheesh. Workmen at their labor, women bound for market, children rooting in the streets, drop all else to surge after the faranchee who may be induced to " sprinkle iron " among them. Even the unclothed infant astride a mother's shoulder thrusts forth a dimpled hand to the passing white man with a gurgle of " sheesh."

As darkness came on I reached the railway station of Mazgoona, some thirty miles from Cairo. The village lay far off to the eastward; but the station master invited me to supper and spread a quilt bed in the telegraph office.

A biting wind blew from the north when I set out again in the morning. A hundred yards from the station, a cry of " monsoor " was borne to my ears, and a servant summoned me back to his master's office.

" I have just received a wire," said the latter, " from the division superintendent. He is coming on the next train. Wait and ask him for a job."

A half-hour later there stepped from the north-bound express, not the grey-haired man I had expected, but a beardless English youth who could not have been a day over twenty. It was a new experience to apply for work to a man younger than myself, but I respectfully stated my case.

" I have n't a vacancy on my division just at present," said the boy. " There is plenty of work in Assiut, though. Want to go that far south? "

"Along the way shadoofs were ceaselessly dipping up the water that gives life to the fields of Egypt"

The "Tombs of the Kings" from the top of the Libyan range, to which I climbed above the plain of Thebes

"Yes," I answered.

He drew a card from his pocket and scribbled on it two fantastic Arabic characters.

"Take the third-class coach," he said, handing me the pass. "This covers my division; but you might drop off in Beni Suef and look about."

Following his advice, I halted near noonday at that wind-swept village. There was no need to make inquiry for the European residents; they were all duly recorded in the "comrades' Baedeker." As in Cairo, however, they offered money in lieu of work, and clutched weakly at the nearest support when I refused it. A young Englishman, inscribed in my notes as "Bromley, Pasha, Inspector of Irrigation; quite easy," gave me evening rendezvous on the bank of the canal beyond the village. Long after dark he appeared on horseback, attended by two natives with flaming torches, and, being ferried across the canal, led the way towards his *dahabeah,* anchored at the shore of the Nile.

"I fancied I'd find something to put you at," he explained, as he turned his horse over to a jet-black groom who popped up out of the darkness, "but I didn't, and the last train's gone. I'll buy you a ticket to Assiut in the morning."

"I have a pass," I put in.

"Oh," said the Englishman, "well, you'll put up with me here to-night, anyway."

He led the way across the gangplank. The change from the bleak wastes of African sand to this floating palace was as startling as if Bromley, Pasha, had been possessor of Aladdin's lamp. Richly-turbaned servants, in spotless white gowns, sprang forward to greet their master; to place a chair for him; to pull off his riding boots and replace them with slippers; to slip the Cairo daily into his hands; and sped noiselessly away to finish the preparation of the evening meal. Had Bromley, Pasha, been a fellow countryman, I might have enjoyed the pleasure of his company instead of dining alone in the richly-furnished ante-room. But Englishmen of the "upper classes" are not noted for their democratic spirit, and the good inspector, no doubt, dreaded the uncouth table manners of a plebeian from half-civilized America.

Breakfast over, next morning, I returned to the village and departed on the south-bound express. The third-class coach was densely packed with huddled natives and their unwieldy cargo; all, that is, except the bench around the sides, on which a trio of gloomy Arabs, denied the privilege of squatting on the floor, perched like fowls on a

roost. The air that swept through the open car was as wintry as the Egyptian is wont to experience. Only the faces of the males were uncovered. The women, wrapped like mummies in fold after fold of black gowns, crouched utterly motionless, well-nigh indistinguishable from the bundles of baggage. Even the guard, wading through the throng, brought no sign of life from the prostrate females; for their tickets were invariably produced by a male escort.

The congestion was somewhat relieved at the junction of the Fayoum branch. The men who had reached their destination rose to their feet, struggled to extricate their much-tied bundles, and rolled them over their fellow travelers and down the steps. Not a female stirred during this unwonted activity of her lord and master. When he had safely deposited his more valuable chattels on the platform, he returned to grasp her by the hand and drag her unceremoniously out the door.

Around the train swarmed hawkers of food. Dates, boiled eggs, baked fish, oranges, and soggy bread-cakes, in quantity sufficient to have supplied an army, were thrust upon whomever ventured to peer outside. From the neighboring fields came workmen laden down with freshly cut bundles of sugar cane, to give the throng the appearance of a forest in motion. Three great canes, as long and unwieldy as bamboo fish rods, sold at a small piastre, and hardly a native in the car purchased less than a half-dozen. By the time we were off again, the coach had been converted into a fodder bin.

The canes were broken into two-foot lengths, and each purchaser, grasping a section in his hands, bit into it, and, jerking his head from side to side like a bulldog, tore off a strip. Then with a sucking that was heard above the roar of the train, he extracted the juice and cast the pulp on the floor about him. At each station, new arrivals squatted on the festive remnants left by their predecessors and spat industriously at the valleys which marked the resting places of the departed. The pulp dried rapidly, and by noonday the floor of the car was carpeted with a sugar-cane mat several inches thick.

My pass ran out in the early afternoon, and I set off to canvass the metropolis of upper Egypt. Several Europeans had already expressed their regrets when, towards evening, I caught sight of the stars and stripes waving over an unusually large building. I turned in at the gate and made inquiry of a native grubbing in the yard.

"Thees house?" he cried, "you not know what thees is? Thees American Hospital."

I drew out my notes. Beneath the name of the hospital appeared this entry:—"Dr. Henry and Dr. Bullock, Americans; easy marks; very religious."

"Come and see house," invited the native. "Very beeg."

He led the way to one side of the building, where nearly a hundred natives, suffering with every small ailment from festered legs to toothache, were huddled disconsolately about the office stairway.

"Thees man come get cured," said my guide. "Thees not sick nuff go bed. American Doctors very good, except"—and his voice dropped to a whisper—"wants all to be Christian."

The patients filed into the office, emerged with cards in their hands, and crowded about the door of the dispensary. As the last emaciated wretch limped away, a slender, middle-aged white man descended the steps.

"Thees Dr. Henry," whispered the native. "Doctor, thees man be American."

I tendered my letter of introduction from the American consulate.

"A mechanical engineer!" cried the doctor. "Fine! Just the man we are looking for. Come with me."

An engineer I was not—of any species. That profession had been forced upon me by the carelessness of Mr. Morgan's secretary. But there flashed suddenly across my mind the saying of an erstwhile employer in California:—"When you 're looking for work, never admit there 's anything you can't do." I followed after the doctor.

At the rear of the establishment, Dr. Bullock and a well-dressed native were superintending the labors of a band of Egyptians, grubbing about the edge of a large reservoir.

"Now, here is the problem," said the older man, when he had introduced me to his colleague. "This reservoir is our water supply. It is filled by the inundations of the Nile. But towards the end of the dry season the water gets so low that our force-pump will not raise it. The native engineer whom we have called in is a graduate of the best technical school in Cairo. But—ah—er"—his voice fell low—"you know what natives are? Now what do *you* suggest?"

Compelled to spar for wind, I asked to be shown the pump and to have the reservoir sounded. The native engineer hung on our heels, listening for any words of wisdom that might fall from my lips. Fortunately, I had once seen a similar difficulty righted.

"There are two possible solutions of the trouble," I began, in an authoritative voice, swinging round until the native appeared on the

edge of my field of vision. "The first is to buy a much more powerful pump"— the native scowled blackly —"the second is to build a smaller reservoir halfway up, get another small pump, and —er— relay the water to the top." The engineer was smiling blandly at the doctors' backs. "Now the first would be costly. The second requires only a few yards of pipe, a cheap pump, and a bit of excavating."

"Ah!" cried the native, rushing forward, "That is my idea exactly, only I did not wish to say —"

"Bah!" interrupted Dr. Henry, "Your idea! Why don't you fellows ever have an idea until someone else gives you one? I 'm glad, Dr. Bullock, that we 've got a man at last who —"

"Yes," I repeated, "I should put in two pumps, by all means."

"I 'll send in the order to Cairo to-night," said the doctor. "Bring your men in the morning, efendee, and set them to digging the reservoir. You don't need another man to help you on that, I hope?"

"You will find little work in Assiut, just now," he went on, as we entered the hospital. "By all means go to Assuan. There is employment for every class of mechanic on the barrage. I suppose two dollars will about cover your fee?" He dropped four ten-piastre pieces into my hand. "But you must stay to supper with us. We have one bed unoccupied, too; but three men have died in it in the past month, and if you are superstitious —"

"Not in the least," I protested.

I rose long before daylight next morning, and groped my way to the station. A ticket to Luxor took barely half my fee as consulting engineer. At break of day, the railway crossed to the eastern bank, and at the next station the train stood motionless while driver, trainmen, and passengers executed their morning prayers in the desert sand. Beyond, the chimneys of great sugar refineries belched forth dense clouds of smoke, and at every halt shivering urchins offered for sale the crude product of the factories, cone-shaped lumps, dark-brown in color.

The voice of the south spoke more distinctly with every mile. We were approaching, now, the district where rain and dew are utterly unknown. The desert grew more arid, the whirling sand finer, more penetrating. The natives, already of darker hue than the cinnamon-colored Cairene, grew blacker and blacker. The chilling wind of two days past turned tepid, then piping hot, and, ere we drew into Luxor, Egypt lay, as of old, under her mantle of densest sunshine.

The tourist colony of Luxor, housed in two great faranchee hotels,

A water-carrier of Luxor. A goatskin full costs one cent

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would be incomplete without a rendezvous for "the comrades." Close by the station squats a tumble-down shack, styled the "Hotel Economica," wherein, dreaming away his old age over a cigarette, sits Pietro Saggharia. Pietro was a "comrade" once. His tales of "the road," gleaned in forty years of errant residence in Africa, and couched in almost any tongue the listener may choose, are to be had for a kind word, even while the exiled Greek is serving the forbidden liquor to blacksliding Mohammedans and the white wanderers who take shelter beneath his roof.

I left my knapsack in Pietro's keeping and struck off for the great ruins of Karnak. The society intrusted with the preservation of the monuments of upper Egypt has put each important ruin in charge of a guardian, and denies admittance to all who leave Cairo without a ticket issued by the society. The price thereof is little short of a vagabond's fortune. I journeyed to Karnak, therefore, resolved to be content with a view of her row of sphinxes and a circuit of her outer walls.

About the approach to the ancient palaces the seekers after backsheesh held high court. Before I had shaken off the last screeching youth, I came upon a great iron gate that shut out the unticketed, and paused to peer through the bars for a glimpse of the much-heralded interior. On the ground before the barrier squatted a sleek, well-fed native. He rose and announced himself as the guard; but made no attempt to drive me off.

"You don't see much from here," he said, in Arabic, as I turned away. "Have you already seen the temple? Or perhaps you have no ticket?"

"La, ma feesh," I replied; "therefore I must stay outside."

"Ah! Then you are no tourist?" smiled the native. "Are you English?"

"Aywa," I answered, for the Arabic term "inglesi" covers all who speak that tongue, "but no tourist, merely a workingman."

"Ah," sighed the guard, "too bad you are an inglesi then; for if you spoke French, the superintendent of the excavations is a good friend of workingmen. But he speaks no English."

"Where shall I find him?"

"In the office just over the hill, there."

I took the direction indicated, and came upon a temporary structure, before which an aged European sat motionless in a rocking chair.

About him was scattered a miscellaneous collection of statues, broken and whole.

"Are you the superintendent, sir?" I asked, in French.

The octogenarian frowned, but answered not a word. I repeated the question in a louder voice.

"Va t'en!" shrieked the old man, grasping a heavy cane that leaned against his chair and shaking it feebly at me. "Go away! You 're a beggar. I know you are."

Evidently the fourth layer of shirt bosom, uncovered specially for the occasion, had failed in its mission. I pleaded a case of mistaken identity. The aged Frenchman watched me with the half-closed eyes of a cat, clinging to his stick.

"Why do you want to see the superintendent?" he demanded.

"To work, if he has any. If not, to see the temple."

"You will not ask him for money?"

"By no means."

"Bien! En ce cas — Maghmoód," he coughed.

A native appeared at the door of the shanty.

"My son is the superintendent," said the old man, displaying a grotesque pattern of wrinkles that was meant for a smile. "Follow Maghmoód."

The son, an affable young Frenchman attired in the thinnest of white trousers and an open shirt, was bowed over a small stone covered with hieroglyphics. I made known my errand.

"Work?" he replied, "No. Unfortunately the society allows us to hire only natives. I wish I might have a few Europeans to superintend the excavations. But I am always pleased to find a workman interested in the antiquities. You are as free to go inside as if you had a ticket. But it is midday now. How do you escape a sunstroke with only that cap? You had better sit here in the shade until the heat dies down a bit."

I assured him that the Egyptian sun had no evil effects upon me and he stepped to the door to shout an order to the sleek gatekeeper just out of sight over the hill. That official grinned knowingly as I appeared, unlocked the gate, and, fending off with one hand several elusive urchins, admitted me to the noonday solitude of the forest of pillars.

As the shadows began to lengthen, a flock of "Cookies" invaded the sacred precincts, and, stumbling through the ruins in pursuit of

their shepherds, two dragomans of phonographical erudition, awoke the dormant echoes with their bleating. With their departure, came less precipitous mortals, weighed down under cameras and note-books. Interest centered in one animated corner of the enclosure. There, in the latest excavation, an army of men and boys toiled at the shadufs that raised the sand and the water which the sluiceways poured into the pit to loosen the soil. Other natives, naked but for a loin-cloth, groped in the mud at the bottom, eager to win the small reward offered to the discoverer of each archæological treasure.

One such prize was captured during the afternoon. A small boy, half buried in the ooze, suddenly ceased his wallowing with a shrill shriek of triumph; and came perilously near being trampled out of sight by his fellow-workmen. In a twinkling, half the band, amid a mighty uproar of shouting and splashing, was tugging at some heavy object still hidden from view.

They raised it at last,— a female figure in blue stone, some four feet in length, which had suffered downfall, burial, and the onslaughts of the Arab horde without apparent injury. The news of the discovery was quickly carried to the shanty on the hill. In a great pith helmet that gave him a striking resemblance to a walking toadstool, the superintendent hurried down to the edge of the pit and gave orders that the statue be carried to a level space, about which a throng of excited tourists lay in wait with open notebooks. There it was carefully washed with sponges, gloated over by the aforementioned tourists, and placed on a car of the tiny railway system laid through the ruins. Natives, in number sufficient to have moved one of Karnak's mighty pillars, tailed out on the rope attached to the car, and, moving to the rhythm of a weird Arabic song of rejoicing, dragged the new find through the temple and deposited it at the feet of the aged Frenchman.

As evening fell, I turned back to the Hotel Economica. Several "comrades" had gathered, but neither they nor Pietro could give me information concerning the land across the Nile, which I proposed to visit next day. The Greek knew naught of the ruins of Thebes, save the anecdote of a former guest, who had attempted the excursion and returned wild with thirst, mumbling an incoherent tale of having floundered in seas of sand.

"For our betters," said Pietro, in the softened Italian in which he chose to address me. "For the rich ladies and gentlemen who can ride on donkeys and be guarded by many dragomans, a visit to Thebes

is very well. But common folk like you and I! Bah! We are not wanted there. They would send no army to look for *us* if we disappeared in the desert. Besides, you must have a ticket to see anything."

I drew from my pocket the folders of the Egyptian tourist companies. A party from the Anglo-Saxon steamer, tied up before the temple of Luxor, was scheduled to leave for an excursion to Thebes in the morning. What easier plan than to shadow these more fortunate nomads?

Fearful of being left behind, I rose at dawn and hastened away to the bazaars to make provision for the day — bread-cakes for hunger and oranges for thirst. A native boatman, denied a fee of ten piastres, accepted one, and set me down on the western bank. The shrill screams of a troop of donkey boys, embarking their animals below the temple, greeted the rising sun. Not long after their landing a vanguard of three veiled and helmeted tourists stepped ashore, and, mounting as many animals, sped away into the trackless desert. I followed them as swiftly as was consistent with faranchee dignity until the last resounding whack of a donkey boy's stave came faintly to my ear; then sat down to await the next section. The inhabitants of a mud village swooped down upon me, and, convinced that I had fallen from my donkey, sought to force upon me a score of wabbly-kneed beasts. My refusal to choose one of these " ver' cheap, ver' fine " animals was taken as an attempt at facetiousness, which it was to their interests as prospective beneficiaries to roar at with delight. When the supposed canard waxed serious, their mirth turned to virulence, and I was in a fair way to be mounted by force when the steamer party rode down upon us.

'Twas an inspiring sight. The half-mile train of donkeys that trailed off across the desert was bestridden by every condition of Anglo-Saxon from raw-boned scientists and diaphanous maidens to the corpulent matrons and mighty masses of self-made men whose incessantly belabored animals brought up the rear. I kept pace with the band and even outstripped the stragglers. After an hour's swift march, that left me dripping with perspiration, the party dismounted to inspect a temple. Gates were there none, and what two guardians could examine the tickets of such a band all at once? I had satisfied my antiquarian tastes before an observant dragoman pointed me out to the officials, and my consequent exit gave me just the time

The main entrance to the ruins of Karnak

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needed to empty the sand from my slippers before the cavalcade set off again.

The sharp ascent to the Tombs of the Kings was more irksome to an over-burdened ass than to a pedestrian. Even though the jeering donkey boys succeeded in pocketing me in the narrow gorges, it was I who carried news of the advancing throng to the gate of the mausoleum. A native lieutenant of police was on hand to offer assistance to the keeper against the unticketed. But the lieutenant spoke Italian, and was so delighted to find that he could hold converse with me without being understood by the surrounding rabble, that he gave me permission to enter, in face of the gate tender's protest.

Sufficiently orientated now to find my way alone, I took silent leave of the party and struck southward towards a precipitous cliff of stone and sand. To pass this barrier the bedonkeyed must make a circuit of many miles. Clinging to crack and crevice, I began the ascent. Halfway up, a roar of voices sounded from the plain below. I groped for a safer hand hold and looked down. About the lieutenant at the foot of the cliff was grouped the official party, gazing upward, confirmed now, no doubt, in their earlier suspicion that I was some madman at large. Before their circuit of the mountain had well begun, I had reached the summit above the goal from which they were separated by many a weary mile.

The view that spread out from the rarely visited spot might well have awakened the envy of the tourists below. North and south, unadorned by a vestige of verdure, stretched the Lybian range, deep vermilion in the valleys, the salient peaks splashed blood-red by the homicidal sunshine. Below bourgeoned the plain of Thebes, its thick green carpet weighted down by a few fellaheen villages and the ponderous playthings of an ancient civilization. As the eye wandered, a primeval saying took on new meaning:—"Egypt is the Nile." Tightly to the life-giving river, distinctly visible in this marvelous atmosphere for a hundred miles, clung the slender land of Egypt, a spotless ribbon of richest green, following every contour of the Father of Waters. All else was but a limitless sea of yellow, choking sand.

I descended to the Tomb of Queen Hatasu and spent the afternoon among the ruins on the edge of the plain. Arriving alone and unannounced, I had little difficulty in entering where I chose. For were the guardian not asleep, I had only to refuse to understand his Arabic

and his excited gestures, until I had examined each monument to my heart's content. I had passed the Colossi of Memnon before the tourists, jaded and drooping from a day in the saddle, overtook me, and I made headway against them to the bank of the river. There they shook me off, however. The dragomans in charge of the party snarled in anger when I offered to pay for the privilege of embarking in the company boat. There was nothing else to do, much as I rebelled against the recrimination, but to be ferried over with the donkeys.

I departed, next day, by the narrow-gauge railway to Assuan, and reached that watering place of the first cataract in time to grace the afternoon concert. Pietro's retreat is the last of the chain. Nearly six hundred miles, now, from the headquarters of die Kunde, I was reduced again to a native inn and the companionship of a half-barbaric horde. It was no such palace as housed my fellow-countrymen on Elephantine Island; but the bedroom on the roof was airy, and the bawling of a muezzin in the minaret above summoned forth no other faranchee to witness the gorgeous birth of a new day.

Some miles beyond Assuan lay the new barrage, where work was plentiful. Just how far, I could not know; still less that it was connected with the village by rail. From morning until high noon, I clawed my way along the ragged cliffs overhanging the impoverished cataract, ere I came in sight of the vast barrier that has robbed it of its waters. Among the rocks of what was once the bed of the Nile, sat a dozen wooden shanties. From the largest, housing the superintendent, came sounds of revelry out of all keeping with the gigantic task at hand. It transpired, however, that this was no ordinary dinner-hour festival. I had arrived, as so often before, mal à propos.

"Work?" gurgled the superintendent, handing back my papers, "The bloody work is off the slate, Yank."

Was it the Egyptian sun that had made him so merry? Perhaps. But there was more than one bottle, blown with the name of Rheims, scattered in the sand before the hut.

"Yesh," confided the Englishman, "she 's all over, old cock. We 're goin' down in the morning. A few dago masons and the coolies will mess about a few weeks more; but all these lads are, hick—'Sailin' 'ome to merry England; never more to roam,'" and his voiced pitched and stumbled over the well-known melody. "But the man that comes up to work in this murderin' sun should be paid for it, boys, even if

it 's only a bloomin' intention. 'Ere, lads, pass the 'at for the Yank. 'E can't go 'ome to-mor —" but I was gone.

I was still the proud possessor of fifty piastres. That sum could not carry me down to the Mediterranean; for the fare by train to Cairo was sixty-five, and the steamer rate of forty-five did not include food. Moreover, 'tis the true vagabond spirit to push on until the last resource is exhausted; and what a reputation I might win among the Kunde by outstripping the best weaver of Märchen among them!

The railway was ended, but steamers departed twice a week from Shellal, above the barrage. At the landing a swarm of natives were loading a dilapidated barge, and a native agent was dozing behind the bars of a home-made ticket office.

"Yes," he yawned, in answer to my query, "there is to-night leaving steamer. Soon be here. The fare is two hundred and fifty piastres."

"Two hun —" I gasped. "Why, that must be first-class."

"Yes, very first class. But gentleman not wish travel second class?"

"Certainly not. Give me a third-class ticket."

The Egyptian fell on his feet and stared at me through the grill.

"What say gentleman? Third-class! No! No! Not go third-class. Second-class one hundred and eighty piastres, very poor."

"But there *is* a third-class, is n't there?"

"Third-class go. Forty piastres. But only for Arabs. White man never go third-class. Not give food, not give sleep, not ride on steamer; ride on barge there, tied with steamer with string. All gentlemen telling me must have European food. Gentlemen not sleep with boxes and horses on barge? Very Arab; very stink —"

"Yes, I know; but give me a third-class ticket," I interrupted, counting out forty piastres.

The native blinked, sat down dejectedly on his stool, and, with a sigh of resignation, reached for a ticket. Suddenly his face lighted up and he pushed my money back to me.

"If white man go third-class," he crowed, "must have pass of Soudan gover'ment. Not can sell ticket without."

"But how can I get a pass before I am in the Soudan?"

"There is living English colonel with fort, far side Assuan."

I hurried away to the railway station. The fare to Assuan was a few cents, and one train ran each way during the afternoon. But it

made the up-trip first! I struck out on the railroad, raced through Assuan, and tore my way through the jungle to the fort, three miles below the village. A squad of khaki-clad black men flourished their bayonets uncomfortably near my ribs. I bawled out my errand in Arabic, and an officer waved the sentinels aside.

"The colonel is sleeping now," he said; "come this evening."

"But I want a pass for this evening's steamer."

"We cannot wake the colonel."

"Is there no one else who can sign the order?"

"Only the colonel. Come this evening."

Order or no order, I would not be red-taped out of a journey into the Soudan. I readjusted my knapsack and pranced off for the third time on the ten-mile course between Assuan and Shellal. Night was falling as I sped through the larger village. When I stepped aside for the down-train, my legs wobbled under me like two pneumatic supports from which half the air had escaped. The screech of a steamboat whistle resounded through the Nile valley as I came in sight of the lights of Shellal. I broke into a run, falling, now and then, on the uneven ground. The sky was clear, but there was no moon and the night was black despite the stars. The deck hands were already casting off the shore lines of the barge, and the steamer was churning the shallow water. I pulled off my coat, threw it over my head, after the fashion in which the fellah wears his gown after nightfall, and, thus slightly disguised, dashed towards the ticket office.

"A ticket to Wady Halfa," I gasped in Arabic, striving to imitate the apologetic tone of an Egyptian peasant. For once I saw a native move with something like haste. The agent glanced at the money, snatched a ticket, and thrust it through the bars, crying: "Hurry up, the boat is go —" but the white hand that clutched the ticket betrayed me. The agent sprang to the door with a howl, "Stop! It 's the faranchee! Come back —"

I caught up my knapsack as I ran, made a flying leap at the slowly receding barge, and landed on all fours under the feet of a troop of horses.

The Arab who stood grinning at me as I picked myself up was evidently the only man on the craft who had witnessed my hurried embarkation. He was dressed in native garb, save for a tightly buttoned khaki jacket. His legs were bare, his feet thrust into low, red slippers. About his head was wound an ample turban of red and

The Egyptian fellah dwells in a hut of reeds and mud

white checks, on either cheek were the scars of three long parallel gashes, and in the top of his right ear hung a large silver ring.

The scars and ring announced him a Nubian; the jacket, a corporal of cavalry; the bridle in his hand, custodian of the horses; and any blockhead must have known that he answered to the name of Maghmoód. We became boon companions, Maghmoód and I, before the journey ended. By night we shared the same blanket; by day he would have divided the contents of his saddlebags with me, had not the black men who trooped down to each landing with baskets of native food made that sacrifice unnecessary. He spun tales of his campaigns with Kitchener in a clear-cut Arabic that even a faranchee must have understood, and, save for the five periods each day when he stood barefooted at his prayers, was as pleasant a companion as any denizen of the western world could have been.

When morning broke I climbed a rickety ladder to the upper deck. It was so densely packed from rail to rail with huddled Arabs that a poodle could not have found room to sit on his haunches. I mounted still higher and came out upon the roof of the barge, an uncumbered promenade from which I could survey the vast panorama of the Nile.

Its banks were barren, now. The fertile strips of green, fed by the shaduf and the sakka, had been left behind with the land of Egypt. Except for a few tiny oases, the aggressive desert had pushed its way to the very water's edge, here sloping down in beaches of softest sand, there falling sheer into the stream in rugged, verdureless cliffs. Yet somewhere in this yellow wilderness a hardy people found sustenance. Now and then a peasant waved a hand or a tattered flag from the shore, and the steamer ran her nose high up on the beach to pick up the bale of produce he had rolled down the slope. With every landing a group of tawny barbarians sprang up from a sandy nowhere to slash from the gorgeous sunlight fantastic shadows as black as their own leathery skins.

On the level with my promenade deck was that of the first-class passengers. There were no English-speaking travelers among them. Half the party were priests of the Eastern Church, phlegmatic, robust men in long black gowns and a headdress like an inverted "stovepipe," beneath which a tangled thicket of hair and beard left barely more than nose and eyes visible. The laymen, evidently, were of the same faith. They took part in the religious services, and their speech was redundant with the softened S of modern Greek.

Maghmoód, perhaps, betrayed my confidences. At any rate, the

oily-skinned Armenian who accosted me from the steamer in execrable French knew more of my affairs than I had told to anyone but the cavalryman.

"My friends have been wondering," he began, abruptly, "how you will find work in the Soudan if you have not money enough to go to Khartum, where the work is? We are all going to Khartum. The venerable patriarch there, with the longest beard, is the head of our church in Africa, going there to look after the Greeks. You should come too."

Several times during the afternoon, he returned to ply me with questions. As we halted before the cliff-hewn temple of Abu Simbel, I descended to the lower deck to pose Maghmoód for a picture. He had just called up Mecca, however, and before he deigned to notice my existence, a voice sounded above me:—"Faranchee, taala hena." I looked up to see the servant of the Armenian beckoning to me from the upper deck.

"All the cabin passengers have been saying," maundered the master, when I reached the roof of the barge, "that you must get to Khartum. We were about to take up a collection to buy you a ticket when the venerable patriarch showed us a better plan. He is in need of a servant who can write English and French. Of course, he is very rich, like all the head patriarchs, and he will, perhaps, pay you much. If he does not need you when he gets to Khartum, there is plenty of work there. Come with me to the cabin."

The "venerable patriarch" spoke only his native tongue. One of his attendant priests, however, was well versed in Italian, and through him his chief dictated a letter to the English mudir of Wady Halfa, and a second to the French consul at Assiut. Neither epistle contained matter of international importance. I half suspected that my employment was little more than charity in disguise; yet the Greek assured me that my services were indispensable. Who knows? But for the force of circumstances, I might still be gracing the suite of the patriarch of Africa.

We tied up at Wady Halfa after nightfall. The first man to cross the gang plank was an English officer bearing an order forbidding any one to land. A telegram from Assuan announced the outbreak of the plague, and the steamer was to be held in quarantine.

A loud-voiced protest rose from the Greeks. The train to Khartum was to depart soon, and the service is not hourly in the Soudan. A swift correspondence took place between the steamer and the mu-

diria. The priests were permitted to disembark. The laymen revolted against such discrimination and were soon released. Within a half-hour, the second-class passengers followed after them; and, with no man of influence left on board, the steamer slipped her moorings and tied up in the middle of the river at the foot of the second cataract.

We were landed early next morning and the Armenian, in company with three Greek residents, met me at the top of the bank.

"The patriarch has made this man your guardian," he explained, pointing to one of his companions. "He is keeper of the Hotel Tewfekieh. He has your third-class ticket to Khartum, and you will live with him until you leave."

It was then Thursday morning. The next train was scheduled to leave on Saturday night. In two days I had more than exhausted the sights of Wady Halfa, and time hung heavily on my hands. Until my meeting with the Greeks, I had never dreamed of proceeding beyond the second cataract. The sun-baked city of Omdurman teemed with interest, perhaps; but a sweltering two-day journey across the desert was no pleasant anticipation. Moreover, half my allotted time had already passed, and my trip around the globe was by no means half completed. Unfortunately, my worldly wealth, if it was my own, was tied up in a bit of cardboard in the possession of my host. It was a small fortune, too, more than ten dollars. Had I been the possessor of half that amount, I should have turned back to Port Saïd forthwith. The good patriarch, certainly, would shed no tears of regret if I failed to appear before him on Tuesday morning. My "guardian," too, always spoke of the ticket as *my* property, and would, no doubt, relinquish it if I could offer a reasonable excuse for turning back. But I could not, and who should say that the railway company would refund the money if I could.

I had, therefore, resolved to carry out the plan as first proposed, when, one afternoon, a native soldier broke in on my musing and summoned me to the office of the commissioner of customs.

"I hear you 're going to Khartum," said that official. "You know you must have a pass from the mudir. Thought I 'd tell you so you would n't get held up at the last moment. The mudiria is closed now, but as soon as it opens, you can get a pass all right."

"Hope not," I muttered, as I turned away.

The next morning a servant in a turban of daring color-scheme ushered me into the office of Governor Parsons, Pasha, raised his palms to his forehead, and withdrew. The mudir was a slight, yet

sturdy Englishman of that frank, energetic type which the British government seems singularly fortunate in choosing as rulers of her dependencies abroad. My application for a pass awakened within him no suspicion of my real desire. He jotted down my answers on the official blank before him as if this granting of permission to ragged adventurers to enter a territory so lately pacified were but a part of his daily routine.

"Name? Birthplace? Nationality? Age? Profession?" He read the questions in a dispassionate voice that quickly dispelled my hope of having the official ban raised against me. "Purpose in going to Khartum? Probable length of stay?"

Oh, well, it did not matter. There would be a satisfaction in having penetrated so far into Africa, and I could trust to fortune to bring me down again.

"I see no reason to refuse you a passport," said the mudir, in his deliberate, clear-cut enunciation. "By the way, one other question which the law requires me to ask. Of course you have sufficient means to support yourself in Khartum, or to pay your way down again?"

"I 've got three piastres," I answered, striving to conceal the joy within me.

"What! No more?"

He turned the paper meditatively in his fingers.

"As a rule, we do not grant passports to those who may by any chance find themselves unprovided for. It is a precaution necessary for the protection of the individual, for Khartum is a far-call from civilization. But then, I am not going to keep you back if you wish to go. I have an infinite faith, justified by years of observation, in the ability of a sailor, especially a young chap, to take care of himself." He pressed his official seal on a red pad and examined it intently. Fate, evidently, was bent on sending me to Khartum. I resolved to take a more active hand in the game.

"Well, a couple of chaps I was talkin' with in Wady give the place a tough name, too, sir," I began. "You see, I did n't know that when I was down below, and since then I 've been thinkin', sir, that it would be a bad port to get on the beach in."

"And these Greeks, are you certain they will employ you? Did they give their address?"

"They did n't give no address, sir, only said they was goin' to Khartum. I was thinkin' it would be better to get down to Port Saïd and

Arab passengers on the Nile steamer. Except for their prayers, they scarcely move once a day

The Greek patriarch whose secretary I became—temporarily

ship out, instead of goin' up. But the ticket 's already bought, sir, an'—"

"Oh," smiled the mudir, "that will offer no difficulty. It is a government railway and I can give you a note to the A. T. M., requesting him to refund you the price of the ticket. On the whole, after what you have said, I think I had better refuse you a pass."

He tore up the blank slowly and, pulling out an official pad, wrote an order to the railway official. I tucked it in my pocket and returned to the hotel.

"What 's the matter?" cried the Armenian, as I sat down with sorrowful face in a corner of the pool room.

"The mudir has refused me a pass to Khartum," I sighed.

"Refused you a pass?" echoed the Armenian, turning to the Greeks that had gathered around us.

Cries of sympathy sounded on all sides.

"Never mind," purred the interpreter, patting me on the shoulder, "Khartum is n't much and the patriarch will get along somehow without you."

"Yes, but there 's no work here to earn my fare down the river."

The remark precipitated a long debate. At last, the interpreter turned to me with a smiling face.

"We have it!" he cried. "As the mudir has refused you permission, perhaps he will refund you the price of the ticket if you go and ask him? That will be enough —"

"But the ticket is n't mine," I protested.

"Not yours?" cried the Armenian, "what nonsense! Of course it 's yours. Whose else is it? The patriarch did n't pay you anything else for your work! Certainly, it 's your ticket."

He took it from the sad-eyed hotel keeper and thrust it into my hand. "Now run over to the mudiria and ask the governor if he can't fix it so you can get the money back."

I ran — past the mudir's office and into that of the traffic manager. He was a young Englishman of the type of those who, according to Pia, "have nothing much to do with their money."

"Do you think," he asked, as he handed me the price of the ticket, "that two quid will carry you down to Port Saïd?"

"Sure," I replied.

"I 'm afraid it won't," he went on; "better have another quid."

He thrust his hand into his pocket and drew out a handful of gold.

"No, I 'm fixed all right," I protested.

"Go ahead, man; take it," he insisted, holding out a sovereign. "Many a one I 've had shoved on me when I was down and out."

"No, I 'm all right," I repeated.

"Well, here," said the manager; "I 'm going to make you out a check on my bank in Cairo for a couple of quid. I think you 'll need it. If you don't, chuck it in the canal and no harm done. We chaps never want to see a man on the rocks, you know."

He filled out the check as he talked, and, in spite of my protest, tucked it into one of my pockets. I acknowledged my thanks; but months afterward I scattered the pieces of that bit of paper on the highway of another clime.

Late that night I departed from Wady Halfa, reaching Assuan on Monday morning. On the following day I boarded the steamer *Cleopatra,* of the Cook Line, as a deck passenger, and drifted lazily down the Nile for five days, landing here and there with the tourists of the upper deck to visit a temple or a mud village. At the Asile Rudolph, Cap Stevenson welcomed me with open arms, but "the union" was wrapped in mourning. Pia, the erudite, had departed, no man knew when nor whither. The end of the Cairo season was at hand. All its social favorites were turning their faces towards other lands. I called on the superintendent of railways to remind him of his promise, and, armed with a pass to Port Saïd, bade the capital farewell.

CHAPTER XI

STEALING A MARCH ON THE FAR EAST

AS the American "hobo" studies the folders of the railway lines, so the vagrant beyond seas scans the posters of the steamship companies. Few were the ships plying to the Far East whose movements I had not followed during that Cairene month of February. On the journey from Ismaïlia to the coast we passed four leviathans, gliding southward through the canal so close that we could read from the windows of the train the books in the hands of the passengers under the awnings. The names on every bow I knew well. Had I not, indeed, watched the departure of two of these same ships from the breakwater of Marseilles? Yet what a gulf intervened between me, crawling along the edge of the desert, and those fortunate mortals, already eastward bound! Gladly would I have exchanged places with the most begrimed stoker on board.

Had I been permitted to choose my next port, it should have been Bombay. He who is stranded at the mouth of the Suez Canal, however, talks not of choice. He clutches desperately at any chance of escape, and is content to be gone, be it east or west, on any craft that floats. Not that ships are lacking. They pass the canal in hundreds every week. But their crews are yellow men, or brown; and their anchorage well out in the stream, where plain Jack Tar may not come to plead his cause.

All this I recalled, and more, as I crawled through the African desert behind a wheezing locomotive. But one solemn oath I swore, ere the first hovel bobbed up across the sand — that, be it on coal barge or raft, I should escape from this canal-side halting-place before her streets and alleys became such eyesores as had once those of Marseilles.

It was high noon when we drew into Port Saïd, and I hurried at once to the compound behind the Catholic monastery. I was just in time. Even as I laid my knapsack on the ground and lined up with the rest, the Arab servant issued from the kitchen with those same battered tins in which he had served us months before. Barely had he disappeared again when three of the company swooped down upon me.

One I had known at the Asile Rudolph. The second — cheering prospect! — was that identical sun-bleached Boer who had squatted against the wall of the "Home" on the early December morning of my first Egyptian day; in those identical weather-beaten garments which he still inhabited. The third I did not recognize. He was a portly German whose outward appearance stamped him as a successful weaver of Märchen, and he spread his squat legs and gazed at me for some time with what appeared to be an admiring grin before he spoke.

"Sie sprechen Deutch, nicht wahr?" he began. "You, perhaps, have n't seen me, but I saw you in Jerusalem. You were making pictures with a photograph machine." A roar of laughter set his fat sides to shaking. "Donner und Blitzen! I have been on the road a good twenty years; I know about every game die Kunde play. But that certainly is the best I ever fell upon. Ach, what a story! I 've been telling them of the comrade with the photograph machine ever since, die Kunde, and it 's a tale they never try to beat. Herr Allah, dass ist, aber, gut!" and he bellowed with mirth until the Arab servant, to whom hilarity in one accepting alms was the height of impudence, threatened to summon the black policeman outside the gate.

The dinner over, I left my bundle with the Maltese youth and hurried away to the shipping quarter. As I anticipated, the demand for sailors was nil. The situation was most graphically described, perhaps, by the American consul.

"A man on the beach in this garbage heap," he testified, "is down and out. He had better be sitting with the penguins on the coast of Patagonia. We have n't signed on a sailor since I was dumped here. If you ever make a get-away, it will be by stowing away. I can't advise you to do it, of course; but if I was in your shoes, I 'd stick away on the first packet homeward bound, and do it quick, before summer comes along and sends you to the hospital. The skippers are tickled to death to get a white sailor, anyway, for these niggers are not worth the rice the company feeds 'em. You 're welcome to tumble up these office stairs every morning, if you like, but I 'm not going to promise to look out for anything for you. I 'd only lose my lamps a' doing it."

I returned to the Home at nightfall, and shared the kitchen — but not the cupboard — with the Boer. Early the next morning, I reached the water-front in time to see a great steamer nosing her way through the small craft that swarmed about the mouth of the canal. Her lines looked strangely familiar. Had I not known that the *War-*

S.S. *Worcestershire* of the Bibby Line, on which I stowed away after taking this picture

Oriental travelers at Port Saïd

wickshire was due in Liverpool on this first day of March, I should have expected to see my former messmates peering over the rail of the new arrival. I made out the name on her bow as she dropped anchor opposite the main street, and turned for information to a nearby poster.

"Bibby Line," ran the notice, "*S. S. Worcestershire.* Recently launched. Largest, best equipped, fastest steamer plying between England and British Burma. First-class passengers only. Fare to Colombo, thirty-six guineas."

A sister ship of the vessel that had rescued me from Marseilles! The very sight of her was reminiscent of the prime roasts we had been wont to serve the fishes of the Mediterranean. I hastened to the landing stage and accosted the officers as they disembarked, with the tourists, for a run ashore.

"Full up, Jack," answered one of them.

I recalled the advice of the American consul. A better craft to "stick away on" would never drop anchor in the canal. Bah! How ludicrous the notion sounded! The Khedive himself could not even have boarded such a vessel, in sun-bleached corduroys and Nazarene slippers. By night, with no moon? The blackest night could not hide such rags! Besides, the steamer was sure to coal and be gone within a couple of hours. I trained my kodak upon her, and turned sorrowfully away.

A native fair was in full swing at the far end of the town. Amid the snake-charmers and shameless dancers, the incident of the morning was soon forgotten. Darkness was falling when I strolled back towards the harbor. At the shop where spitted mutton sold cheaply, I halted for supper; but the keeper had put up his shutters. No doubt he was sowing his year's earnings among the gamblers at the fair. Hungrily I wandered on, turned into the main street of the European section, and stopped stock still, dumb with astonishment. The vista beyond the canal was still cut off by the vast bulk of the *Worcestershire!*

What an opportunity — if once I could get on board! Perhaps I might! In the terms of the paddock, it was "a hundred-to-one shot;" but who could say when better odds would be chalked up? A quartermaster was almost sure to halt me at the gang plank. Some palpable excuse I must offer him for being rowed out to the steamer. If only I had something to be delivered on board, a basket of fruit, or — shades of Cairo! — of course — a letter of introduction!

Breathlessly, I dashed into the Home, snatched a sheet of paper and an envelope from the Maltese youth, and scribbled an appeal for employment, in any capacity. Having sealed the envelope against the prying eyes of subordinates, I addressed it in a flourishing hand to the chief steward.

But my knapsack? Certainly I could not carry that on board! I dumped the contents on the floor and thrust the kodak and my papers into an inside pocket. There was nothing else — but hold! That bundle at the bottom? The minister's frock coat, of broadcloth, with wide, silk-faced lapels! What kind fairy had gainsaid my reiterated threats to throw away that useless garment? Eagerly I slipped into it. The very thing! With my unshaven face and bleached legs in the shadow, I could rival Beau Brummel himself. Many an English lord, touring in the East, wears a cap after nightfall.

"Scrape that stuff together for me," I bawled, springing past the Maltese youth. "If I don't turn up within a week, give 'em to the beachcombers."

The *Worcestershire* was still at anchor. Two Arab boatmen squatted under a torch on one corner of the landing stage. The legal fare was six pence. I had three. It cost me some precious moments to beat down one of the watermen. He stepped into his felucca at last and pushed off cautiously towards the rows of lighted portholes.

As we neared the steamer, I made out a figure in uniform on the lowest step of the ship's ladder. The game was lost! I might have talked my way by a quartermaster, but I certainly could not pass this bridge officer.

The boatman swung his craft against the ladder with a sweep of the oar. I held up the note:

"Will you kindly deliver this to the chief steward? The writer wants an answer before the ship leaves."

"I really have n't time," apologized the mate. "I 've an errand ashore and we leave in fifteen minutes. You can run up with it yourself, though. Here, boatman, row me over to the custom wharf."

I sprang up the ladder. Except for several sahib-respecting Lascars, who jumped aside as I appeared, the promenade deck was deserted. From somewhere below came the sound of waltz music and the laughter of merry people. I strolled leisurely around to the port side and walked aft in the shadow of the upper cabins. For some moments I stood alone in the darkness, gazing at the reflection of the lower portholes in the canal. Then, a step sounded at the door of

the saloon behind me, a heavy British step that advanced several paces and halted. One could almost feel the authority in that step; one could certainly hear it in the gruff "ahem" with which the newcomer cleared his throat. An officer, no doubt, about to order me ashore! I waited in literal fear and trembling.

A minute passed, then another. I turned my head, inch by inch, and peered over my shoulder. In the shaft of light stood a man in faultless evening attire, gazing at me through the intervening darkness. His dress suggested a passenger; but the very set of his feet on the deck proved him no landsman. The skipper himself, surely! What under officer would dare appear out of uniform during a voyage?

I turned my head away again, determined to bear the impending blow with fortitude. The dreaded being cleared his throat once more, stepped nearer, and stood for a moment without speaking. Then a hand touched me lightly on the sleeve.

"Beg pahdon, sir," murmured an apologetic voice; "beg pahdon, sir, but 'ave you 'ad dinner yet? The other gentlemen 's h'all been served, sir."

I swallowed my throat and turned around, laying a hand over the place where my necktie should have been.

"I am not a passenger, my man," I replied haughtily; "I have a communication for the chief steward."

The flunky stretched out his hand.

"Oh, I cawn't send it, you know," I protested. "I must deliver it in person, for it requires an answer before the ship leaves."

"Lord, you can't see *'im,"* gasped the Briton; "we 're givin' a ball and 'e 's in the drawrin'-room."

The sound of our voices had attracted the quartermaster on duty. Behind him appeared a young steward.

"You 'd best get ashore quick," said the sailor; "we 're only waitin' the fourth mite. Best call a boatman or you 'll get carried off."

"Really!" I cried, looking anxiously about me, "But I must have an answer, you know."

"I could n't disturb *'im,"* wheezed the older steward.

"Well, show me where he is," I protested.

"Now we 're off in a couple o' winks," warned the quartermaster.

"'Ere, mite," said the youth; "I 'll take you down."

I followed him to the deck below and along a lighted passageway. My disguise would never stand the glare of a drawing-room. I thrust the note into the hands of my guide.

"Be sure to bring me the answer," I cautioned.

He pushed his way through a throng of his messmates and disappeared into the drawing-room. A moment later he returned with the answer I had expected.

"So you're on the beach?" he grinned, "you sure did get it on Clarence, all right. 'Ard luck. The chief says the force is full an' the company rules don't allow 'im to tyke on a man to work 'is passage. Sye, you 've slipped your cayble, anyway, ayn't you? We 're not 'omeward bound; we 're going out. You 'd best rustle it an' get ashore."

He turned into the galley. Never had I ventured to hope that he would let me out of his sight before he had turned me over to the quartermaster. His carelessness was due, no doubt, to his certainty that I had "slipped my cayble." I dashed out of the passageway as if fearful of being carried off; but, once shrouded in the kindly night, paused to peer about me.

There were a score of places that offered a temporary hiding; but a stow-away through the Suez Canal must be more than temporarily hidden. I ran over in my mind the favorite lurking places on ocean liners. Inside a mattress in the steerage? First-class only. In the hold? Hatches all battened down. On the fidleys or in the coal bunkers? Very well in the depth of winter, but sure death in this climate. In the forecastle? Indian crew. In the rubbish under the forecastle head? Sure to be found in a few hours by tattle-tale natives. In the chain locker? The anchor might be dropped anywhere in the canal, and I should be dragged piecemeal through the hawse-hole.

Still pondering, I climbed to the spot where I had first been accosted. From the starboard side, forward, came the voice of the fourth mate, clambering on board. In a few moments officers and men would be flocking up from below. Noiselessly, I sprang up the ladder to the hurricane deck. That and the bridge were still deserted. I crept to the nearest lifeboat and dragged myself along the edge that hung well out over the canal. The canvas cover was held in place by a cord that ran alternately through eyeholes in the cloth and around iron pins under the gunwale. I tugged at the cord for a minute that seemed a century before I succeeded in pulling it over the first pin. After that, all went easily. With the cover loosened for a space of four feet, I thrust my head through the opening. Before my shoulders were inside my feet no longer reached the ship's rail. I squirmed in, inch by inch, after the fashion of a swimmer, fearful of making the

slightest noise. Only my feet remained outside when my hand struck an oar inside the boat. Its rattle could have been heard in Cairo. Drenched with perspiration, I listened for my discoverer. The festive music, evidently, engrossed the attention of the entire ship's company. I drew in my feet by doubling up like a pocketknife, and, thrusting a hand through the opening, fastened the cord over all but one pin.

The space inside was more than limited. Seats, casks, oars, and boat-hooks left me barely room to stretch out on my back without touching the canvas above me. Two officers brushed by, and mounting to the bridge, called out their orders within six feet of me. The rattle of the anchor chain announced that the long passage of the canal had begun. When I could breathe without opening my mouth at every gasp, I was reminded that the shop where spitted mutton sold cheaply had been closed. Within an hour, that misfortune was forgotten. The sharp edge of the water cask under my back, the oars that supported my hips, the seat that my shoulders barely reached, began to cut into my flesh, sending sharp pains through every limb. The slightest movement might send some unseen article clattering. Worst of all, there was just space sufficient for my head while I kept my neck strained to the utmost. The tip of my nose touched the canvas. To have stirred that ever so slightly would have sent me packing at the first canal station.

The position grew more painful hour by hour, but with the beginning of the "grave-yard" watch my body grew numb and I sank into a half-comatose state that was not sleeping.

Daylight brought no relief, though the sunshine, filtering through the canvas, disclosed the objects about me. There came the jabbering of strange tongues as the crew quarreled over their work about the deck. Now and then, a shout from a canal station marked our progress. Passengers mounting to the upper deck brushed against the lifeboat in their promenading. From time to time confidential chats sounded in my ears.

All save the officers soon retreated to the shade below. In the arid desert through which we were steaming that day must certainly have been calorific. But there, at least, a breeze was stirring. By four bells, the Egyptian sun, pouring down upon the canvas, had turned my hiding place into an oven. By noon, it resembled nothing so cool and refreshing. A raging thirst had long since put hunger to flight. In the early afternoon, as I lay motionless on my grill, there sounded the splash of water, close at hand. Two natives had been sent to wash

the lifeboat. For an hour they dashed bucketful after bucketful against it, splashing, now and then, even the canvas over my head.

The gong had just sounded for afternoon tea when the ship began to rock slightly. A faint sound of waves breaking on the bow succeeded. A light breeze moved the canvas ever so little and the throb of the engines increased. Had we passed out of the canal? My first impulse was to tear at the canvas and bellow for water. But had we left Suez behind? This, perhaps, was only the Bitter Lakes? Or, if we had reached the Red Sea, the pilot might still be on board! To be set ashore now was a fate far more to be dreaded than during the first hours of my torture, for it meant an endless tramp through the burning desert, back to Port Saïd.

I held my peace and listened intently for any word that might indicate our whereabouts. None came, but the setting sun brought relief, and falling darkness found my thirst somewhat abated. The motion of the ship lacked the pitch of the open sea. I resolved to take no chances with victory so close at hand.

With night came the passengers, to lean against the boat and pour out confidences. How easily I might have posed as a fortune-teller among them during the rest of the voyage! A dozen schemes, ranging from an enthusiastic project for the immediate evangelization of all the Indias to the arrangement of a tiger-hunt in the Assam hills, were planned within my hearing during that motionless evening. But the sound of music below left the deck deserted, and I settled down to the less humiliating occupation of listening to the faint tread of the second mate, who paced the bridge above me.

An hour passed. Other thoughts drove from my memory the secrets that had been forced upon me. Suddenly, there sounded a light step and a frou-frou of skirts, suggestive of ball-room scenes. Behind came a heavier tread, a hurried word, and a ripple of laughter. Shades of the prophet! Why must every pair on board choose that particular spot to pour out their secrets? Because a man and a maid chanced to pause where I could hear their lightest whisper, was I to shout a warning and tramp back to starve in the alleyways of Port Saïd? I refused the sacrifice, and for my refusal, heard many words — and other sounds. The moon was beautiful that night — I know, though I did not see it. A young English commissioner had left his island home two weeks before, resolved to dwell among the hills of India in a bungalow alone — that, too, I know, though I saw him not. Yet

he landed with other plans, plans drawn up and sealed on the hurricane deck of the *Worcestershire* in the waning hours of the second of March; amid many words — and other sounds.

The night wore on. Less fearful, now, of discovery, I moved, for the first time in thirty hours, and, rolling slowly on my side, fell asleep. It was broad daylight when I awoke to the sounding of two bells. The ship was rolling in no uncertain manner. I tugged at the cord that bound down the boat cover and peered out. For some moments barely a muscle of my body responded to the command of the will. Even when I had wormed myself out I came near losing my grip on the edge of the boat before my feet touched the rail. Once on deck, I waited to be discovered. The frock coat lay in the lifeboat. No landlubber could have mistaken me for a passenger now.

Calmly, I walked aft and descended to the promenade deck. A score of bare-legged Lascars were "washing down." Near them, the sarang, in all the glory of embroidered jacket and rubber boots, strutted back and forth, fumbling at the silver chain about his neck. I strolled by them. The low-caste fellows sprang out of my way like startled cats. Their superior gazed at me with a half-friendly, half-fawning smile. If they were surprised, they did not show it. Probably they were not. What was it to them, if a sahib chose to turn out in a ragged hunting-costume for an early promenade? Stranger things than that they had seen among these enigmatical beings with white skins. Unfortunately the *Worcestershire* was a bit too cumbersome or I might have carried it off before my presence on board was suspected.

Some time I paced the deck with majestic tread without catching sight of a white face. At last a diminutive son of Britain clambered unsteadily up the companionway, clinging tenaciously to a pot of tea.

"Here, boy," I called; "who 's on the bridge, the mate?"

"Yes, sir," stammered the boy, sidling away; "the mite, sir."

"Well, tell him there 's a stowaway on board."

"Wat 's that, sir? You see, sir, I 'm a new cabin boy, on me first trip —"

"And you don't know what a stowaway is, eh?"

"No, sir."

"If you 'll run along and tell the mate, you 'll find out soon enough."

The boy made his way aft, clutching, now and then, at the rail, and mounted to the upper deck. Judging from the grin on his face as he came running back, he had added a new word to his vocabulary.

"The mite says for you to come up on the bridge, quick. 'E's bloody mad."

I climbed again to the hurricane deck. The mate's sanguinary choler had so overcome him that he had deserted his post and waited for me at the foot of the bridge ladder. He was burly and lantern-jawed, clad in the negligé of early morning in the tropical seas; bare-headed, barefooted, his hairy chest agap, his duck trousers rolled up to his knees, and a thick tangle of dishevelled hair waving in the wind. With the ferocious mien of an executioner, he glared at me in utter silence.

"I 'm a sailor, sir," I began; "I was on the beach in Port Saïd. I 'm sorry, sir, but I had to get away —"

The mate gave no other sign of having heard than to push his massive jaw further out.

"There was no chance to sign on there, sir. Not a man shipped in months, sir, and it 's a tough place to be on the beach —"

"What the holy hell has that got to do with me and my ship!" roared the officer, springing several yards into the air and descending to shake his sledge-hammer fist under my nose. "You —— ——, I 'll give you six months for this directly we get to Colombo. You 'll stow away on my ship, will you? Get to hell down off this deck before I brain you with this bucket, you —— ——," but his subsequent remarks, like his attire, were for early morning use, and would have created a even greater furor in that vicinity, a few hours later, than his bare legs.

Not certain to what quarter of the *Worcestershire* the nautical term applied, I started forward. Another bellow brought me to a halt.

"You —," but never mind the details. The new order, expurgated, amounted to the information that I was to wait in the waist until the captain had seen me.

I descended, snatched a draught of tepid water at the pump, and leaned against the port bulwarks. Too hungry to be greatly terrified, I had really taken new heart at the mate's threat. "Colombo" he had said. Until then I had feared the *Worcestershire,* like most East-Indiamen, would put in at Aden; and unwelcome passengers, turned over to the British governor there, were invariably packed off on the first steamer to Port Saïd.

An hour, two hours, three hours, I stood in the waist, returning the stares of every member of the ship's company, Hindu or English,

whose duties or curiosity brought him to that quarter. With the sounding of eight bells a steward returned from the galley with a can of coffee. Once started, an endless procession of bacon, steaks, and ragoûts filed by under my nose. To snatch at one of the pans would have been my undoing. I thrust my head over the bulwarks, where sea breezes blew, and stared at the sand billows of the Arabian coast. Not until the denizens of the "glory-hole" had returned to their duties did I venture to turn around once more. "Peggy," the stewards' steward, peered furtively out upon me.

"Eh! Mite," he whispered; "'ad anythink to eat yet?"

"Not lately."

"Well, come inside. There 's a pan o' scow left to dump."

Very little of it was dumped that morning.

I had barely returned to my place when four officers descended the starboard ladder to the waist. They were led by the mate, immaculate now, as the rest, in a snow-white uniform. His vocabulary, too, had improved. A "sir," falling from his lips, singled out the captain. My hopes rose at once. The commander was the exact antithesis of his first officer. Small, dapper, almost dainty of figure and movement, his iron-gray hair gave setting to a face in which neither toleration nor authority had gained the mastery.

With never a sign of having seen me, the officers mounted the poop ladder and strolled slowly aft, examining as they went. "Peggy" appeared at the door of the "glory-hole" with a dish cloth in his hands.

"Morning h'inspection," he explained, in a husky whisper; "they 'll be back on the port side directly they 've h'inspected the poop. The little cuss 's the old man, Cap Harris, commodore in the Nyval Reserve. 'E 's all right."

"Hope he lives out the voyage," I muttered.

"The fat, jolly chap 's the chief steward," went on "Peggy." "Best man on the ship. The long un 's the doctor."

A stowaway takes no precedence over any other apparatus on board ship that needs regulating. After their reappearance in the waist the officers halted several times within a few feet of me to scrutinize some article of the steamer's equipment. When the scuppers had been ordered cleaned and the pump had been pronounced in proper sanitary condition, the mate turned to the captain and pointed an accusing finger at me: —

"There he is, sir."

"Ah," said the skipper. "What was your object, my man, in stowing yourself away on this vessel?"

I began the story I had attempted to tell the first officer. The captain heard it all without interruption.

"Yes, I know," he mused, when I had finished. "Port Saïd is a very unfortunate place to be left without funds. But why did you not come on board and ask permission to work your passage?"

What stowaway has not heard that formula, even though the inquirer has refused that permission a dozen times during the voyage?

"I did, sir!" I cried, "That's just what I did! I brought a letter to the chief steward. That's how I come on board, sir."

"That's so!" put in the "fat jolly chap" eagerly; "he sent a note to me in the drawing-room the night of the ball. But I sent back word that my force was full."

"I see," pondered the captain. "You're the first man that ever stowed away on a vessel under my command," he went on, almost sadly; "you make yourself liable to severe punishment, you know?"

"I'd put him in irons and send him up, sir," burst out the mate.

"N-no," returned the skipper, "that would n't be just, Dick. You know Port Saïd. But you know you will have to work on the voyage," he added, turning to me.

"Why, certainly, sir," I cried, suddenly assailed with the fear that he might see, through my coat, the kodak that contained a likeness of his ship.

"You told the chief officer you were a sailor, I believe?"

"A. B., sir — and steward."

"Have you anything you can put him at, Chester?"

"I've more than I can use now," replied the heavy-weight.

"Beg pardon, sir," put in the mate, "but the chief engineer says he can use an extra man down below."

He was a kindly fellow, was the mate. Not only was the stoke hole an inferno in that latitude, but the Hindu firemen would never have ceased gloating over the sahib who had been sentenced to the degradation of working among them.

"No! No!" answered the commander; "The man is a sailor and a steward. He is not a stoker. You had better take him on deck with you, Dick."

He started up the ladder; but the mate loathed to acknowledge himself defeated. He made a sign to the doctor.

"Stick out your tongue," commanded Sangrado, suddenly.

I complied.

"Does that look as if he had been without food for forty-eight hours?" demanded the mate.

What he hoped to prove by the question I could not fathom. It would never do to incriminate "Peggy," and I kept silent. The leech shrugged his shoulders.

"Huh," muttered the mate, "I know what I 'd do with him if I was in command."

"Take him on deck with you, Dick," repeated the captain, from above.

"And his accommodation?" put in the chief steward.

"There are a few berths unoccupied in the quarters of your men, are there not?"

"Two or three, I believe."

"Give him one of those and increase the mess allowance by one. Get something to eat now, my man, and report to the chief officer, forward, when you have finished."

"I 'll send you down a couple of cotton suits," whispered the chief steward, as he labored up the ladder; "you 'll die of the plague with that outfit on."

I lingered in the "glory-hole" long enough to have eaten breakfast and hurried forward. The mate, scowling, began a rapid-fire of questions, in the hope of tangling me up in a contradictory story. The attempt failed.

"Box the compass," he snarled, suddenly.

I did so. For an hour he subjected me to a severe nautical examination without any startling satisfaction.

"Umph!" he growled at last, "Take that holly-stone with the handle" — it weighed a good thirty pounds —"and go to polishing the poop. You 'll work every day from six in the morning until seven at night, with a half-hour off for your mess. From four to six in the morning and from eight to ten at night, you 'll stand look-out in the crow's-nest and save us two Lascars. On Sunday you 'll stand look-out from four to eight, nine to twelve, two to seven, and eight to ten. Look lively, now, and see that the poop deck begins to shine when I come aft."

Without a break, I continued this régime as long as the voyage lasted. Having once imposed his sentence upon me, the mate rarely gave me a word. Less from fear of his wrath than of a leer of satis-

faction on his rough-hewn face, I toiled steadily at the task he had assigned. The holly-stone took on great weight, but the privilege of viewing every tropical sunrise and sunset from the crow's-nest I would not have exchanged for a seat at the captain's table. My messmates were good-hearted, their chief ever eager to do me a kindly service. The Hindu crew took vast joy in my fancied degradation, and those intervals were rare when a group of the brown rascals were not hovering over me, chattering like apes in the forest, and grinning derisively. But the proudest man on board was the sarang; for it was through him that the mate sent me his mandates. Since the days when he rolled naked and unashamed on the sand floor of his natal hut on the banks of the Hoogly, the native boatswain had dreamed of no greater bliss than to issue commands to a sahib.

Ten days the *Worcestershire* steamed on through a motionless sea, under a sun that waxed more torrid every hour. The "glory-hole" became uninhabitable. Men who had waded through the snow on the docks of Liverpool two weeks before took to sleeping on the deck of the poop, in the thinnest of garb. With the smell of land in our nostrils, the good-night chorus was sung more than once on the eleventh evening, and our sleep was brief. Before darkness fled I had climbed again to my coign of vantage on the foremast. The first gray of dawn revealed the dim outline of a low mountain range, tinged with color by the unborn sunrise behind it. Slowly the mountains faded from view as the lowlands rose up to greet us. By eight bells we were within hailing distance of a score of brown-black islanders, unburdened with clothing, who paddled boldly seaward in their out-rigger canoes. The *Worcestershire* found entrance to a far-reaching breakwater, and, escorted by a great school of small craft, rode to an anchorage in the center of the harbor. A multitude swarmed on board, uncontrolled and uncontrollable, and in the resulting overthrow of discipline I left my stone where the mess-call had found it, and hurried below to make up my "shore bundle." By the kindness of the chief steward, I was amply supplied with cotton suits. The frock coat, still in the lifeboat, I willed to "Peggy," and reported to the captain. His permission granted, I tossed my bundle into the company launch, and, with one English half-penny jingleless in my pocket, set foot on the verdant island of Ceylon.

CHAPTER XII

THE REALMS OF GAUTAMA

DIFFICULT, indeed, would it be to choose a more striking introduction to the wonderland of the Far East than that egg-shaped remnant left over from the building of India. How incomplete and lusterless seems the picture drawn by the anticipating imagination when one stands at last in the midst of its prolific, kaleidoscopic life! Sharp and vivid are the impressions that come crowding on the traveler in jumbled, disordered succession, and he experiences a confusion such as comes with the first glance at a great painting. He must look again and again before the underlying conception stands out clearly through the mass of unfamiliar detail.

It would have been strange if the white man of peripatetic mood had not found his way to this Eden of the eastern seas. Within ten minutes of my landing I was greeted by a score of "beachcombers" gathered in the black shade under the portico of a large government building. In garb, they were men of means. It costs nothing worth mentioning to keep spotless the jacket and trousers of thinnest cotton that make up the wardrobe of the Indias. More than their sun-baked faces, their listless movements and ingrown indolence betrayed them as "vags." Those of the band who were not stretched out at full length on the flagging of the veranda dangled their feet from the encircling railing or leaned against the massive pillars, puffing lazily at pipe or cigarette. On the greensward below, two natives sat on their heels before portable stands, rising now and then to pour out a glass of tea for the "comber" who tossed a Ceylon cent at their feet.

Theoretically, the party had gathered to seek employment. The morning hour, since time immemorial, had called the exiles together in the shade of the shipping office to lay in wait for any stranger, the "cut of whose jib" stamped him as a captain. "Shipping," however, was dull. Imbued with the habit, "the boys" continued to gather, but into their drowsy yarning rarely intruded the fear of being driven forth from this island paradise.

Now and again some energetic member of the band rose to peer

through the open door of the shipping office; yet retreated hastily, for a roar as of an angry bull was the invariable greeting from within. When courage came, I ventured to glance inside. A burly Englishman, as nearly naked as a mild sense of propriety permitted, lay on his back in a reclining chair, on the arm of which he threw a mass of typewritten sheets every half-minute, to mop up the perspiration that poured down his rotund face and hairy chest in spite of the heavy velvet *punkahs* that swung slowly back and forth above him.

"Shippin' master," volunteered a recumbent Irishman behind me. "But divil a man dast disturb 'im. If you valy your loife, kape out of 'is soight."

At noonday the office closed. The beachcombers wandered languidly away to some other shaded spot, and seeking refuge from the equatorial sun in a neighboring park, I dreamed away my first day's freedom from the holly-stone. A native runner roused me towards nightfall and thrust into my hands a card setting forth the virtues of "The Original and Well-Recognized Sailors' Boarding House of Colombo, under Proprietorship of C. D. Almeida." It was a two-story building in the native quarter of Pettah, of stone floor, but otherwise of the lightest wooden material. The dining-room, in the center of the establishment, boasted no roof. Narrow, windowless chambers of the second story, facing this open space, housed the seafaring guests.

Almeida, the proprietor, was a Singhalese of purest caste. His white silk jacket was modestly decorated with red braid and glistening brass buttons. Beneath the folds of a skirt of gayest plaid peeped feet that had never known the restraint of shoes, the toes of which stood out staunchly independent one from another. For all his occupation he clung stoutly to the symbols of his social superiority — tiny pearl earrings and a huge circle comb of celluloid. Fate had been unkind to Almeida. Though his fellow-countrymen, with rarely an exception, boasted thick tresses of long, raven-tinted hair, the boarding master was well nigh bald. His gray and scanty locks did little more than streak his black scalp, and the art of a lifetime of hair dressing could not make the knob at the back of his head larger than a hickory nut. Obviously no circle comb could sit in position so insecure; at intervals as regular as the ticking of his great silver watch, that of Almeida dropped on the ground behind him. Wherever he moved,

An outrigger canoe and an outdoor laundry in Colombo, Ceylon

Road-repairers of Ceylon. Highway between Colombo and Kandy

there slunk at his heels a native urchin who had known no other task in many a month than that of restoring to its place the ornament of caste.

The simple formality of signing a promise-to-pay made me a guest. Four white men and as many black leaned their elbows on the unplaned table, awaiting the evening meal. In an adjoining grotto, two natives were stumbling over each other around a kettle and a fire of fagots. Both were clothed in the scantiest of breechclouts. Now and then they squatted on their smoothly polished heels, scratched savagely at some portion of their scrawny bodies, and sprang up again to plunge both hands into the kettle.

In due time the mess grew too hot for stirring. The pair resumed their squat and burst forth in a dreadful chatter of falsetto voices. Then fell ominous silence. Suddenly the cooks dashed into the smoke that veiled the entrance to the cave, and, flinging themselves upon the caldron, dragged it forth into the dining-room. The senior scooped out handfuls of steaming rice and filled our plates. The younger returned to the smoky cavern and laid hold on a smaller pot that contained a curry of chopped fish. Besides these two delicacies, there were bananas in abundance and a chettie of water, brackish, discolored and lukewarm.

Having distributed heavy pewter spoons among the guests, the cooks filled a battered basin with rice and, dropping on their haunches, thrust the food into their mouths with both hands. The blazing fagots turned to dying embers, the wick that floated in a bottle of oil lighted up a bare corner of the table, and the rising moon, falling upon the naked figures, cast weird shadows across the uneven floor.

Almeida took his leave. The dropping of his comb sounded twice or thrice between the dining-room and the street, and the patter of his bare feet mingled with the whisper of the night outside. I laid my head on a hand as a sign of sleepiness, and a cook led the way to the second story and into one of the narrow rooms. It was furnished with three wooden tables of Dachshund legs. From two pegs in the wall hung several diaphanous tropical garments, the property of my unknown roommates. I inquired for my bed; but the cook spoke no English, and I sat down on the nearest table to await a more communicative mortal.

A long hour afterward two white men stumbled up the stairs, the first carrying a candle high above his head. He was lean and sallow,

gray-haired and clean shaven, with something in his manner that spoke of better days. His companion was a burly, tow-headed Swede.

"Oho! Ole," grinned the older man; "here 's a new bunkie. Why don't you turn in, mate?"

"Have n't found my bed yet," I answered.

"Your bed!" cried the newcomer, "Why, damn it, man, you 're sitting on it."

I followed the example of the pair in reducing my attire to the regulation coolie costume and, turning my bundled clothing into a pillow, sweated out the night.

Over the tea, bananas, and cakes of ground cocoanut that made up the Almeida breakfast, I exchanged yarns with my companions of the night. The Swede was merely a sailor; the older man a less commonplace being. He was an Irishman named John Askins, a master of arts of Dublin University and a civil engineer by profession. Twenty years before, an encroaching asthma had driven him from his native island. In his wanderings through every tropical country under British rule, he had picked up a fluent use of half the dialects of the east, from the clicking Kaffir to the guttural tongue of Kabul. Not by choice was Askins, M. A., a vagabond. Periodically, however, employment failed him and he fell, as now, into the ranks of those who listened open-mouthed — when he chose to abandon the slang of "the road" and the forecastle — to his professorial diction.

Brief as was my acquaintance with Ceylon, I had already discovered two possible openings to the wage-earning class. The first was to join the police force. Half the European officers of Colombo had once been beachcombers. Between them and our band existed a liaison so close that the misdemeanors of "the boys" were rarely punished, and more than one white castaway was housed surreptitiously in the barracks on Slave Island. I had no hesitancy, therefore, in applying for information to the Irishman whose beat embraced the cricket-ground separating Pettah from the European quarter.

He painted the life in uniform in glowing colors. His salary was fifty rupees a month. No princely income, surely, for bear in mind that it takes three rupees to make a dollar. The "graft," too, he admitted sadly, was next to nothing. Yet he supported a wife — a white one, at that, strange to say — and three children, kept several servants, owned a house of his own, and increased his bank account

on every pay day. Ludicrous, you know, is the cost of living in Ceylon.

I hurried eagerly away to the office of the superintendent of police. An awkward squad of white recruits was sprinkling with perspiration the green before the government bungalow, from which a servant emerged to inquire my errand. The alacrity with which I was admitted to the inner sanctum aroused within me visions of myself in uniform that were by no means dispelled by the hasty examination to which the superintendent subjected me.

"Yes! Yes!" he broke in, before I had answered his last question; "I think we can take you on all right. By the way, what part of the country are you from? You 'll be from Yorkshire side, I take it?"

"United States."

"A-oh! You don't say so? An American! Really, you don't look it, you know. What a shame! Had a beat all picked out for you. But as an American you 'd better go to the Philippines and apply on the force there. We can't give you anything in Ceylon or India, don't you know. Awfully sorry. Good day."

None but a man ignorant of the ways of the Far East could have conceived my second scheme in one sleepless night. It was suggested by the fact that, in earlier years, I had, as the Englishman puts it, "gone in for" cross-country running. Returning to Almeida's, I soon picked up a partner for the projected enterprise. He was a young and lanky Englishman, who, though he had never indulged in athletic sports, was certain that in eluding for a decade the police of four continents he had developed a record-breaking stride.

In a shady corner of Gordon Gardens we arranged the details of our plan, which was — why not admit it at once? — to become 'rickshaw runners. The hollow-chested natives who plied this equestrian vocation leased their vehicles from the American consul. That official surely would be glad to rent the two fine, new carriages that stood idle in his establishment. The license would cost little. Cloth slippers that sold for a few cents in the bazaars would render us as light-footed as our competitors. We could not, of course, offer indiscriminate service. Half the population of Colombo would have swept down upon us, clamoring for the unheard-of honor of riding behind a sahib. But nothing would be easier than to hang above our licenses the announcement, "for white men only."

"By thunder," enthused the Briton, as we turned out into the sun-

light once more, "it 's a new scheme all right, absolutely unique. It 's sure to attract attention mighty quick."

It did. So quickly, in fact, that had there been a white policeman within call when we broached the subject to the American consul, we should have found lodging at once in two nicely padded chambers of the city hospital.

"Did you two lunatics," shrieked my fellow-countryman, from behind the protecting bulwark of his desk, "ever hear of Caste? Would the Europeans patronize you? You bet they would — with a fine coat of tar and feathers! You 'd need it, too, for those long, slim knives the runners carry. Of all the idiotic schemes! Why, you — you — don't you know that 's a crime — or, if it is n't, the governor would make it one in about ten minutes. Go lie in the shade somewhere until you get your senses — if you 've got one!"

Years ago, I came to the conclusion that the day of the enterprising young man is past. But it was cruel of the consul to put the matter so baldly. Luckily, the Englishman possessed four cents or we should have been denied the bitter joy of drowning our grief and dissolving our partnership in a glass of arrack.

From the distance of the western world the rate in Almeida's boarding house — a half rupee a day — does not seem exorbitant. It was, however. In the native restaurants that abounded in Colombo, one could live on half that amount; and as for lodging — what utter foolishness to pay for the privilege of sleeping on a short-legged table when the ground was so much softer? No sooner, therefore, had a pawnbroker of Pettah appraised my useless winter garments at two rupees than I paid my bill at the "Original Boarding House" and became resident at large.

On the edge of the native section stood an eating shop that had won the patronage of half the beachcombers in the city. It was a low, thatched shanty, constructed, like its neighbors, chiefly of bamboo. The front wall — unless the canvas curtain that warded off the blazing sunshine be reckoned such — was all doorway, before which stood a platform heaped high with multicolored tropical fruits.

A dozen white men bawled out a greeting as I pushed aside the curtain and crowded into a place on one of the creaking benches around the table. At the entrance stood the proprietor, guarding a home-made safe, and smiling so vociferously upon whomever added to its contents that his circle comb rose and fell with the exertion. Plainly in sight of the yawning customers, in a smoke-choked back

room, two chocolate-colored cooks, who had evidently divided between them a garment as large as a lady's handkerchief, toiled over a long row of kettles.

The dinner was table d'hôte, and cost four cents. A naked boy set before me a heaping plate of rice, four bananas, a glass of tea, and six small dishes of curried vegetables, meat, and shrimps. The time had come when I must learn, like my companions, to dispense with table utensils. I began the first lesson by following the movements of my fellow-guests. Each dug in the center of his mound of rice a hole of the size of a coffee-cup. Into this he dumped the curries one after another and buried them by pushing in the sides of the excavation. The interment finished, he fell upon the mess with both hands, and mixed the ingredients as the "board-bucker" mixes concrete — by shoveling it over and over.

Let no one fancy that the Far East has no etiquette of the table. It was the height of ill-breeding, for example, to grasp a handful of food and eat it from the open palm. Obviously, the Englishman beside me had received careful Singhalese training. Without bending a joint of his hand, he plunged it into the mixture before him, drew his fingers closely together, and, thrusting his hand to the base of the thumb into his mouth, sucked off the food by taking a long, quick breath.

I imitated him, gasped, choked, and clutched at the bench with both hands, while the tears ran in rivulets down my cheeks. 'Twas my introduction to the curries of Ceylon. A mouthful of cayenne pepper would have tasted like ice cream in comparison. The stuff was so calorific — in chillies, not in temperature — that it burned my fingers.

"Hot, Yank?" grinned the Englishman. "That 's what all the lads finds 'em when they first get out here. In a week they 'll be just right. In a month you 'll be longin' for Madras where they make 'em 'otter."

The dinner over, the guests threw under their feet the food that remained; washed their fingers, surreptitiously, of course, in a chettie of drinking water; and sauntered out into the star-lit night. Across the way lay the cricket ground of Colombo, a twelve-acre field, silent and deserted. While the policeman yawned at the far end of his beat, I scrambled over the bamboo fence, and, choosing a spot where the grass was not entirely worn off, went to bed. The proverbial white elephant was never more of a burden than my kodak had become. Hitherto, I had easily concealed it in a pocket of my corduroy

coat. Now my entire wardrobe could have been packed inside the apparatus, and wherever I wandered I was forced to lug the thing under one arm, like a pet poodle, wrapped in a ragged cover that deceived the covetous as to its real value. By night it served as pillow, and so fixed a habit had its possession become, that I ran no more risk of leaving it behind than of going away without my cap.

The grassy slope was as soft as a mattress, the tepid night breeze just the right covering. I quickly fell asleep. A feeling, as of someone close at hand, aroused me. Slowly I opened my eyes. Within a foot of me, his naked body glistening in the moonlight, crouched a coolie. I bounded to my feet. But the native was quicker than I. With a leap that would have done credit to a kangaroo, he shot suddenly into the air, landed noiselessly on his bare feet some three yards away, and, before I could take a step in his direction, was gone.

Midnight, certainly, had passed. The flanking streets were utterly deserted. Not a light shone in the long rows of shops. Only the ceaseless chanting of myriads of insects tempered the stillness of the night. I drew a cord from my pocket, tied one end to the kodak and another to a wrist, and lay down again. The precaution was wisely taken. A tug at my arm awakened me a second time and, as I started up, a black rascal, closely resembling my first visitor, scampered away across the playground. Dawn was drawing a thin gray line on the black canvas of night. I left my bed unmade and wandered away into the city.

Before the sun was high I had found employment. A resident in the Cinnamon Gardens had advertised for a carpenter, and for the three days following I superintended the labors of a band of coolies in laying a hardwood floor in his bungalow. During that period, a rumor, spreading among the beachcombers, aroused them to new wakefulness. Colombo was soon to be visited by a circus! It was not that the mixed odor of sawdust and pink lemonade appealed greatly to "the boys." But tradition whispered that the annual show would bring employment to more than one whose curry and rice advanced with laggard steps.

Dropping in at Almeida's when my task was ended, I found Askins agog with news of the coming spectacle.

"She 'll be here in a week or ten days," he cried, gayly. "That means a few dibs a day for some of us. For circuses must have white men. Niggers won't do. That 's our game, Franck. Just lay low and

when she blows in, we 'll swoop down on the supe and get our cognoms on the pay roll.

"Or say!" he went on, in more excited tones. "Better still! You won't need to lie idle meantime, either. An idea strikes me. Remember the arrack shop where the two stokers set us up a bottle of fire-water the other day? Well, just across the street is the Salvation Army. Now you waltz down to the meeting there to-night and get converted. They 'll hand you down a swell white uniform, put you right in a good hash-house, and throw a few odd grafts in your way. All you 'll have to do 'll be to baste a drum or something of the kind twice a day, and you can have quite a few chips tucked away by the time the circus comes."

"Good scheme," I answered, "but I 've got a few chips tucked away now, and if she is n't due for ten days that will give me time for a jaunt into the interior of the island."

"Well, it 's a ramble worth making," admitted the Irishman, "but look out for the sun, and be sure you 're on hand again for the big show."

The city of Colombo is well spread out. Though I set off early next morning, it was nearly noon when I crossed the Victoria bridge at Grand Pass and struck the open country. Great was the contrast between the Ceylon of my imagination and the reality. A riot of tropical vegetation spread out on every hand; in the dense shadows swarmed naked humans uncountable. But jungle was there none, neither wild men, nor savage beasts. Every acre was producing for the use of man. The highway was wide, well-built as in Europe, close flanked on either side by thick forests of towering palm trees. Here and there, bands of coolies repaired the roadway, or fought back the aggressive vegetation with ax-like knives. Clumsy, broad-wheeled bullock carts, in appearance like our "prairie schooners," creaked by behind humped oxen ambling seaward at a snail's pace. Under his protecting roof, made, not of canvas, as the first glimpse suggested, but of thousands of leaves sewn together, the scrawny driver grinned cheerily and mumbled some strange word of greeting. Even the heat was less infernal than I had anticipated. The glare of sunshine was dazzling; a wrist uncovered for a moment was burned red as with a branding-iron; my face shown browner in the mirror of each passing stream; but often are the sun's rays more debilitating on a summer day at home.

In the forest the slim bamboo and the broad-leafed banana tree

abounded; but the cocoanut palm predominated. In every grove, prehensile coolies, armed with heavy knives, walked up the slender trunks, and, hiding themselves in the tuft of leaves sixty feet above, chopped off the nuts in clusters of three. One could have recited a poem between the moment of their launching and the time when they struck the soft, spongy earth, to rebound high into the air. 'Tis a national music, the dull, muffled thump of cocoanuts, as reminiscent, ever after, of dense, tropical forests as the tinkle of the donkey bell of Spain, or the squawk of the water wheel of Egypt.

I stepped aside from the highway in the mid-afternoon, and lay down on a grassy slope under shielding palms. A crackling of twigs drew my attention, and, catching sight of a pair of eyes filled with mute wonder, I nodded reassuringly. A native, dressed in a ribbon and a tangle of oily hair, stepped from behind a great drooping banana leaf and advanced with faltering steps. Behind him emerged a score of men and boys, as heavily clothed as the leader; and the band, smiling like a company of ballet dancers en scène, moved forward hesitatingly, halting frequently to exchange signs of mutual encouragemen. Their timidity was in strange contrast to the boisterous or menacing attitude of the Arab. One felt that a harsh word or a gesture of annoyance would have sent these deferential country-folk scampering away through the forest. A white man, whatever his station in life, is a tin god in Ceylon.

With a simultaneous gurgle of greeting, the natives squatted in a semicircle at the foot of the knoll on which I lay, as obsequious in manner as loyal subjects come to do homage to their cannibal king. We chatted, intelligibly if not glibly, in the language of signs. My pipe aroused great curiosity. When it had burned out, I turned it over to the leader. He passed it on to his companions, each and all of whom, to my horror, tested the strange thing by thrusting the stem halfway down his throat and sucking fiercely at it. Even when they had examined every other article in my knapsack, my visitors were not content, and implored me with tears in their eyes to give them leave to open my kodak. I distracted their attention by a careful inspection of their tools and betel-nut pouches. With truly Spanish generosity they insisted on presenting me with every article that I asked to see; and then sneaked round behind me to carry off the gift while I was examining another.

I rose to continue my way, but the natives burst out in vigorous protest, and, despatching three youths on some unknown errand,

dropped again on their haunches and fell to preparing new chews of betel-nut. The emissaries soon returned, one carrying a jack-fruit, another a bunch of bananas, and the third swinging three green cocoanuts by the rope-like stem. The leader laid the gifts, one after another, at my feet. Two men armed with jungle knives sprang forward, and while one hacked at the adamantine jack-fruit, the other caught up a cocoanut, chopped off the top with one stroke, and invited me to drink. The milk — the national beverage of Ceylon — was cool and refreshing, but the meat of the green nut as inedible as a leather strap. The jack-fruit, of the size and appearance of a water melon, was split at last into longitudinal slices. These, in turn, split sidewise into dozens of segments not unlike those of the orange, each one containing a large, kidney-shaped stone. The meat itself was white, coarse-grained, and rather tasteless. The bananas were smaller, but more savory than those of the West Indies. When I had sampled each of the gifts, I distributed them among the donators, and turned down to the highway.

It is easy to account for the vagabond's fondness for tropical lands. He loves to strut about among reverential black men in all the glory of a white skin; it flatters him astonishingly to have native policemen and soldiers draw up at attention and salute as he passes; he adores, of course, the lazy indolence of the East. But all these things are as nothing compared with his one great advantage over his brother in northern lands. He escapes the terror of the coming night. Only he who has roamed penniless through a colder world can know this dread; how, like an oppressive cloud, rising on the horizon of each new day, it casts its gloom over every niggardly atom of good fortune. In the north one must have shelter. Other things which the world calls necessities the vagrant may do without, but the night will not be put off like hunger and thirst. In the tropics? In Ceylon? Bah! What is night but a more comfortable day? If it grows too dark for tramping, one lies down in the bed under his feet and rises, refreshed, with the new dawn.

From my forest lodging bordering the twenty-first mile post, I set out on the second day's tramp before the country people were astir. The highway, bursting forth from the encircling palm trees now and then, stalked across a small, rolling plain. Villages rose with every mile, rambling, two-row hamlets of bamboo, where elbow room was ample. Between them, isolated thatched cottages peeped from beneath the trees. Here were none of the densely-packed collections of

human stys so general in Italy and the land of the Arab; for Ceylon, four centuries tributary to Europe, knows not the fear of marauding bands.

As the sun climbed higher, grinning groups of rustics pattered by, the men beclouted, the women clad in a short skirt and a shorter waist, between which glistened ten inches or more of velvety brown skin. Hunger and thirst come often in the tropics, but never was highway more liberally stocked with food and drink. Half the houses displayed for sale the fruits of the surrounding forest, and tea and cocoanut cakes could be had anywhere. On a bamboo pedestal before every hovel, however wretched, stood an earthenware *chettie* of water, beside which hung as a drinking-vessel the half of a cocoanut-shell; commonly slimy and moss-grown. Great was the joy of every family whose hut I entered — silent joy, generally, for the unhoped-for honor of welcoming a white man left one and all, from the half-naked wife to the babe in arms — no household lacked the latter — speechless with awe and veneration. They are charming children, these smiling brown people, and industrious, though moving always after the languid manner of the tropical zone.

Bathing is the national hobby of Ceylon. Never a stream crawling under the highway but was alive with splashing natives. Mothers, plodding along the route, halted at every rivulet to roll a banana leaf into a cone-shaped bucket and pour uncounted gallons of water on their sputtering infants, crouched naked on the bank of the stream. Travelers on foot or by bullock cart took hourly dips en route. The husbandman abandoned his tilling at frequent intervals to plunge into the nearest water hole. His wife, instead of calling on her neighbors, met them at the brook and, turned mermaid, gossiped in cool and comfort. The men, subjected only to a loin cloth, gave no heed to their clothing. The women, wound from knees to armpits in gossamer-like sheets of snowy white, emerged from their aquatic couches and, turning themselves round and round in the blazing sunshine like spitted fowls over a fire, marched homeward in dry garments.

With the third day the landscape changed. The slightly rolling lowlands of the coast gave way to tea-clad foothills, heralding the mountains of the interior. The highway, mounting languidly, offered noonday vista of the ranges that have won for Ceylon the title of "Switzerland of the tropics." Here were none of the rugged peaks and crags of the Alps nor the barren wilderness of Palestine. Endless, to the north and south, hovering in a sea-blue haze, stretched

Singhalese ladies wear only a skirt and a short waist, between which several inches of brown skin are visible

A Singhalese woman rarely misses an opportunity to give her children a bath

rolling mountains, thick clothed in prolific vegetation. Unaggressive, effeminate they seemed, compared with northern highlands; summits and slopes a succession of graceful curves, with never an angular stroke, hills plump of contour, like Ruben's figures.

Try as I would, I had not succeeded in making my daily expenditures since leaving the coast more than ten cents. Near the summit of the route I paused at an amateur shop by the wayside. It was a pathetic little hovel, built of rubbish picked up in the forest. A board, stretched like a counter across the open doorway, was heavily laden with bananas. Near at hand a plump, brown matron, in abbreviated skirt and a waist little more than neckerchief, was spreading out grain — with her feet — on a long grass mat. Unfortunately, the list of Singhalese words that I had jotted down at the dictation of Askins lacked the all-important term "how much." I pointed at the fruit and tossed a coin on the counter. It was a copper piece, worth one and three-fourths cents; enough, surely, for the purchase of a half-dozen bananas. The matron approached, picked up the coin gingerly, and, turning it over and over in her hand, stared at me with wide-open eyes. Had I been niggardly in my offer? I was thrusting a hand into my pocket for another copper, when the female, motioning to me to open my knapsack, dropped into it three dozen bananas, hesitated, and, assuming the air of one whose conscience is master of his cupidity, added a fourth cluster.

A furlong beyond, in a shaded elbow of the route, I turned to the task of lightening my burden. Small success would have crowned my efforts but for the arrival of a fellow-wayfarer. He was a man of fifty or sixty, blacker of skin than the Singhalese. A ten-yard strip of cloth, of a pattern in which two-inch stripes of white and brilliant red alternated, was wrapped round his waist and fell to his knees. Over his head was folded a sheet of orange hue. In either hand he carried a bundle, wrapped in cloth and tied with green vines. The upper half of his face was that of meekness personified; the rest was covered with such a beard as one might swear by, deeply streaked with gray.

Painfully he limped to the roadside, and squatted on his heels in the edge of the shade. By every token he was "on the road."

"Have a bite, Jack?" I invited, pushing the fruit towards him.

A child's voice squeaked within him. Gravely he rose to his feet to express his gratitude in every known posture of the human figure except that of standing on his head. That formality over, he fell to with a will — and both hands — so willingly in fact that, with never a

pause nor a choke, he made way with twenty-eight bananas. Small wonder if he would have slept a while in the edge of the shade after so noteworthy a feat.

I rose to plod on, however, and he would not be left behind,— far behind, that is. Reiterated solicitations could not induce him to walk beside me; he pattered always two paces in the rear, too mindful of his own inferiority to march abreast with a sahib. From the gestures and gasps that my questions drew forth, I gathered that he was a *yogi,* a holy man — temporarily at least — bound on a pilgrimage to some shrine in the mountains. Two hours beyond our meeting, he halted at a branch road, knelt in the highway, and, ere I had divined his intention, imprinted a sonorous kiss on the top of one of my Nazarene slippers. Only my dexterity saved the other. He stood up slowly, almost sadly, as one grieved to part from good company — or bananas, shook the dust of the route from his beard, and, turning into the forest-throttled byway, was gone.

Night, striding over the mountains in the seven-league boots he wears in the tropics, playfully laid hand on me just at the entrance to the inn of the Sign of the Palm Tree. The landlord demanded no fee; the far-off howling of dogs lulled me to sleep. With dawn, I was off once more. Sunrise waved his greeting over the leafy crests of the Peradiniya Gardens, and her European residents, lolling in their church-bound 'rickshaws, stared at my entrance into the ancient city of Kandy.

Centuries ago, this mountain-girdled metropolis of the interior was the seat of the native king. To-day, the monarch of Ceylon is a bluff Englishman, housed within sight of the harbor of Colombo in a stone mansion more appropriate to Regent's Row than to this land of swaying palm trees. The descendant of the native dynasty still holds his mock court in the capital of his forefathers, struggling against the encroachment of trousers and cravats and the wiles of courtiers stoop-shouldered with the wisdom of Oxford and Cambridge. But his duties have narrowed down to that of upholding the ancestral religion. For Kandy is a holy city. Buddhists, not merely of Ceylon but of India and the equatorial islands, make pilgrimage to its ancient shrine. Long before the coming of the Nazarene, tradition whispers, there was found in Burma one of the teeth of Gautama, the Enlightened One. How it came to be picked up thus far from the burial place of the Wandering Prince is as inexplicable as the discovery of splinters of the true Cross in strange and sundry regions far distant

The woman who sold me the bananas

The thatch roof at the roadside, under which I slept on the second night of my tramp to Kandy

from Calvary. Be that as it may, a rich embassy from the king of Burma bore the relic to this egg-shaped island, and over it was erected the celebrated " Temple of the Tooth."

It is a time-worn structure of gray stone, simple in architecture from the view point of the Orient, set in a lotus grove on the shores of a crystal-clear lake. Mindful of the assaults that I had more than once provoked by entering a house of worship in the East, I contented myself with a circuit of its double, crenelated walls and a peep up the broad steps that led to the interior.

The keeper of the inn to which fate assigned me had two sons, who, thanks to the local mission-school, spoke fluent English. The older was a youth of fifteen. In the West he would have been rated a child. Here he was accepted as a man, to whom the problems of life had already taken form. Our conversation turned naturally to the subject of religion; naturally, because that subject is always first and foremost in the East. His religion sets for the Oriental his place in the community; it tells him what work he shall do all the days of his life, what his children and his children's children shall do. According to the dictates of his faith he eats or refrains from eating, he seeks repose or watches out the night, he greets his fellow-beings or shuns them like dogs. Society is honey-combed with sects and creeds and castes. Every man wears some visible symbol of his religion, and before all else he scrutinizes the sign of caste of any stranger with whom he comes in contact. No secondary matter, nor something to be aired once a week, is a man's religion in the East. It stalks at his heels as relentlessly as his shadow at noonday.

" I suppose," I was saying, soon after the son of the innkeeper had broached this unavoidable topic, " I suppose that, as you have been educated in a Protestant school, you are a Christian? "

The youth eyed me for a moment with noncommittal gravity.

" May I know," he asked in reply — to change the subject, I fancied —" whether you are a missionary? "

" On the contrary," I protested, " I am a sailor."

" Because," he went on, " one must know to whom one speaks. I am a Christian always — when I am in school or talking to missionaries.

" There are many religions in the world, and surely that of the white man is a good religion. We learn much more that is useful in the schools of the Christians than in our own. But, my friend," he leaned forward with the earnestness of one who is about to disclose a great se-

cret, "there is but one true religion. He who is seeking the true religion — if *you* are seeking the true religion, you will find it right here in our island of Ceylon."

It comes ever back to that. Hordes of missionaries may flock to the "heathen" lands, bulky reports anent the thousands who have been "gathered into the fold" may rouse the charity of the pious at home; yet in moments of sober earnest, when, in the words of Askins, "it comes to a show-down," the convert beyond seas is a stout champion of the faith of his ancestors.

"Many people," continued my informant, "nearly all the people of Ceylon who would learn from the Christians, who are hungry and poor, or who would have work, pretend the religion of the white man. For we receive more, the teachers are our better friends if we tell them we are Christians. And surely we do the right in saying so? We wish all to please the missionaries and we have no other way to do; for it gives them much pleasure to have many converts. Have you, I wonder," he concluded, "visited our Temple of the Tooth."

"Outside," I answered. "Are sahibs allowed to enter?"

"Surely!" cried the youth, "The Buddhists have not exclusion. We are joyed to have white men in our temples. To-night, we are having a service very important in the Temple of the Tooth. With my uncle, who keeps the cloth-shop across the way, I shall go. Will you not forget your religion and honor us by coming?"

"Certainly," I answered.

Two flaring torches threw fantastic shadows over the chattering throng of Singhalese that bore us bodily up the broad stairway to the sacred shrine. In the outer temple, at the top of the flight, surged a maudlin multitude around a dozen booths devoted to the sale of candles, bits of cardboard, and the white lotus-flower sacred to Gautama, the Buddha. Above the sharp-pitched roar of the faithful sounded the incessant rattle of copper coins. The smallest child, the most ragged mendicant, struggled against the human stream that would have swept him into the inner temple, until he had bought or begged a taper or flower to lay in the lap of his favorite statue. From every nook and corner, the effigy of the Enlightened One, defying in posture the laws of anatomy, surveyed the scene with sad serenity.

Of all the throng, I alone was shod. I dropped my slippers at the landing, and, half expecting a stern command to remove my socks, advanced into the brighter light of the interior. A whisper rose beside me and swelled in volume as it passed quickly from mouth to mouth: —

Singhalese infants are very sturdy during the first years

The yogi who ate twenty-eight of the bananas at a sitting

"Sahib! sahib!" I had dreaded lest my coming should precipitate a riot, but Buddha himself, arriving thus unannounced, could not have won more boisterous welcome. The worshipers swept down upon me, shrieking their hospitality. Several thrust into my hands newly purchased blossoms, another — strange action, it seemed then, in a house of worship — pressed upon me a badly-rolled cigar of native make; from every side came candles and matches. At the tinkle of a far-off bell the natives fell back, leaving a lane for our passing. Two saffron-robed priests, smiling and salaaming at every step, advanced to meet me and led the way to a balcony overlooking the lake.

In the semi-darkness of a corner squatted, in scanty breechclouts and ample turbans, three natives,— low-caste coolies, no doubt, to whom fell the menial tasks within the temple inclosure; for before each sat what appeared to be a large basket. I took station near them with my attendant priests, and awaited "the service very important."

Suddenly the cornered trio, each grasping in either hand a weapon reminiscent of a footpad's billy, stretched their hands high above their heads and brought them down with a crash that would have startled a less phlegmatic sahib out of all sanity. What I had taken for baskets were tom-toms! Without losing a single beat, the drummers began, with the third or fourth stroke, to blow lustily on long pipes from which issued a plaintive wailing. I spoke no more with my interpreter. For the "musicians," having pressed into service every sound-wave lingering in the vicinity, monopolized them during the ensuing two hours. Two simple rules govern the production of Singhalese music: first, make as much noise as possible all the time; second, to heighten the effect, make more.

Puffing serenely at my stogie, I marched with the officiating monks, who had given me place of honor in their ranks, from one shrine to another. Behind us surged a murmuring, self-prostrating multitude. No one sat during the service, and there was nothing resembling a sermon. The priests addressed themselves only to the dreamy-eyed Buddhas, and craved boons or chanted their gratitude for former favors in a rising and falling monotone in which I caught, now and then, the rhythm and rhyme of poetry.

It was late when the service ended. The boiler-factory music ceased as suddenly as it had begun, the worshipers poured forth into the soft night, and I was left alone with my guides and a dozen priests.

"See," whispered the intermittent Christian. "You are honored. The head man of the temple comes."

An aged friar, emerging from an inner shrine, drew near slowly. In outward appearance, he was an exact replica of the surrounding priests. A brilliant yellow robe was his only garment. His head was shaven; his arms, right shoulder and feet, bare.

Having joined the group, he studied me a moment in silence, then addressed me in the native tongue.

"He is asking," explained my interpreter, "if you are liking to see the sacred tooth?"

I bowed my thanks. The high priest led the way to the innermost shrine of the temple, a chamber in arrangement not unlike the holy sepulchre in the church of that name in Jerusalem. In the center of the vault he halted, and, imitated in every movement by the attendant priests and my guide, fell on his knees, and, muttering a prayer each time, touched his forehead to the pavement thrice.

Erect once more, he drew from the tabernacle before him a gold casket of the size of a ditty-box. From it he took a second, a bit smaller, and handed the first to one of his companions. From the second he drew a third, from the third a fourth. The process was repeated until nearly every subordinate priest held a coffer, some fantastically wrought, some inlaid with precious stones. With the opening of every third box all those not already burdened fell on their knees and repeated their first genuflections. There appeared at last the innermost receptacle, not over an inch each way, and set with diamonds and rubies. Its sanctity required more than the usual number of prostrations and murmured incantations. Carefully the superior opened it, and disclosed to view a tooth, yellow with age, which, assuredly, never grew in any human mouth. Each of the party admired the molar in turn, but even the high priest took care not to touch it. The fitting together of the box of boxes required as much mummery as its disintegration.

The ceremony was ended at last, the tabernacle locked, and we passed on to inspect other places of interest. Among them was the temple library, famous throughout the island. It contained four books. Two of these — and they were thumb-worn — were in English,— recent works of Theosophists. For the priests of Buddha, far from being the ignorant and superstitious creatures of Western fancy, are often liberal-minded students of every phase of the world's religions. Printed volumes, however, did not constitute the real library. On the shelves around the walls were thousands of metal tablets, two feet long, a fourth as wide, and an inch thick, covered on both sides

Central Ceylon. Making roof-tiles. The sun is the only kiln

The priests of the "Temple of the Tooth" in Kandy, who were my guides during my stay in the city

with the hieroglyphics of Ceylon. When I had handled several of these, and heard a priest read one in a mournful, sing-song chant, like the falling of water at a distance, I acknowledged myself content and turned with my guides toward the door.

The high priest followed us into the outer temple. During all the evening he had addressed me only through an interpreter. As I paused to pick up my slippers, however, he salaamed gravely and spoke once more, this time, to my utter amazement, in faultless English.

"White men," ran his speech, "often join the true religion. There are many who are priests of Buddha in Burma, and some in Ceylon. They are much honored."

"You see," explained the son of the innkeeper, as we wended our way through the silent bazaars, "he did not wish that you should at first know that he speaks English. He has done you great honor by asking you to become a priest; for so he meant. But often come white men to the temple and mock all that is brought to see, making, many times, very cruel jokes, and he who is close to Buddha waited to see. You have not done so. Therefore are you honored."

We mounted to the second story of the inn and, stripped naked, lay down on our *charpoys* — native beds consisting of a strip of canvas stretched on a frame. But it was long before I fell asleep; for the youth, seeing it his clear duty, harangued me long and ungrammatically from the neighboring darkness on the virtues of the "true religion."

Somehow the impression gained ground rapidly among the residents of Kandy that the white man who had attended the Sunday evening service contemplated joining the yellow-robed ascetics at the Temple of the Tooth. Just where the rumor had its birth I know not. Belike the mere fact that I had turned none of the rites to jest had won me favor. Or was it that my garb marked me as one more likely to attain Nirvana than the bestarched Europeans whose levity so grieved him who was "close to Buddha"?

At any rate, the rumor grew like the cornstalk in Kansas. With the morning sun came pious shopkeepers to fawn upon me. Before I had breakfasted, two temple priests, their newly-shaven heads and faces shining under their brightly-colored parasols like polished brass, called at the inn and invited me to a stroll through the market place. Never an excursion did I make in Kandy or its environs without at least a pair of saffron-garbed companions. That I should find a ready welcome in the temple a hundred natives assured me, the priests by veiled hints, the laymen more openly. They were moved, perhaps, by

a no more altruistic motive than a desire to have on exhibition in the local monastery a white priest. But to their credit be it said that no suggestion of a material inducement crept into their arguments.

"Buddhism," ran their plea, "is the true religion. The mere fact that it has many more followers than any other religion proves that, does it not? And the doctrine of the Enlightened One embraces every anomaly of humanity — even white men. Only those who accept it can hope for future happiness. Even if you are not yet convinced of its truth, why not accept it now and run no risk of future perdition?"

Surely, the most conscientious of Christian missionaries never attempted proselytism less underhandedly.

My escape from Kandy savored of strategy, but I reached the station unchallenged, and, exchanging my last two rupees for a ticket to Colombo, established myself in a third-class compartment. It was already occupied by a native couple more gifted with offspring than attire. Barely had I settled down to study Singhalese domestic life at close range, however, when a mighty uproar burst out near at hand. A half-breed in the uniform of a guard raced across the platform, and, thrusting his head into the compartment, poured forth on my apparently unoffending companions a torrent of incomprehensible words. Had he denounced me as a victim of the plague? Plainly the family was greatly frightened. The father sprang wildly to his feet and attempted to clutch a half-dozen unwieldy bundles in a painfully inadequate number of hands. The wife, no less terrified, raked together from floor and benches as many naked urchins, in assorted sizes, but entangled, in her haste, the legs of her lord and master, and sent him sprawling among his howling descendants. With a sizzling oath, the trainman snatched open the door and, springing inside, tumbled baggage, infants, and parents unceremoniously out upon the platform. Still bellowing, he drove the trembling wretches to another compartment; a party of well-dressed natives took possession of the recently vacated benches; and we were off.

That self-congratulatory attitude common to traveling salesmen the world over betrayed the caste of my new companions. All of them spoke English, and, eager to air their accomplishments, lost no time in engaging me in conversation. Marvelous was the information and the variations of my mother tongue that assailed me from all sides. It is with difficulty that one refrains from "stuffing" these vainglorious, yet childish fellows and it was evident that some other European

had already yielded to the temptation. But my astonishment at the treatment of the exiled family had by no means subsided.

"Will some of you chaps tell me," I interrupted, "why the guard ordered those other natives out of here, and then let you in?"

The drummers glared at me a moment in silence, looked at each other, and turned to stare out of the windows. Most grossly, evidently, had I insulted them. But even an insult cannot keep an Oriental long silent. The travelers fidgeted in their seats, nudged each other, and focused their stare once more upon me.

"Know you, sir," said the most portly of the group, with severe countenance, "know you that those were base coolies, who are not allowed to ride in the same compartment with white gentlemen. We," and the brass buttons of his embroidered jacket struggled to perform their office, "are high-caste Singhalese, sir. Therefore may we ride with sahibs."

CHAPTER XIII

SAWDUST AND TINSEL IN THE ORIENT

THE train rumbled into Colombo in the late afternoon. I made my way at once through the pattering throng to Almeida's. In the roofless dining-room sat Askins, puffing furiously at his clay pipe and scribbling with a sputtering pen in one of several half-penny notebooks scattered on the table before him. At the further end lolled the Swede and two fellow-beachcombers, staring at the writer as at the performer of some mighty miracle.

"Doing?" grinned the Irishman, in answer to my question. "Oh! Just another of my tales. You know you can't knock around British-India for twenty years without picking up a few things. About the time Ole took his first bath I began jotting down some of the mix-ups I've wandered into. That lot went to amuse Davy Jones when a tub I was playing second engineer on threw up the sponge in the Bay of Bengal. Later on I knocked the best of the yarns together again, and I tear off another now and then when life gets dull.

"Published? Oh, I may shove them off one of these days on some penny weekly. But if I don't, the coroner can have them for his trouble when I come to furl my mainsheet. He won't find anything else."

"Vonderful!" cried Ole, with a Dr. Watson accent, "I haf study in der school an' I rhead sometimes a story in der dog-vatch; min der man vitch can make der stories! Vonderful, by Gott!"

"By the way, Franck," said Askins, gathering the notebooks together, "how about the yellow-birds who tried to shave your sky-piece over in Kandy?"

"Why, who has been telling you —?" I gasped.

"Have n't heard a word," replied the Irishman; "but I knew they 'd flag you. How did it turn out?"

I related my experiences with the temple priests.

"It 's an old game out here," mused Askins. "In the good old days, whenever one of the boys went broke, it was get converted. Not all played out yet either. There 's a bunch of one-time beachcombers

scattered among the Burmese monasteries. An old pal of mine wears the yellow up in Nepal. No graft about him, though. He 's a firm believer.

"Now and then a down-and-outer, especially over Bombay side, turns Mohammedan. But most of 'em don't take to the surgical operation, and the cross-legged one remains the favorite. Of course, there 's always the missionaries, too, but there 's not much in it for a white man to turn Christian. There was good money in the Mohammedan game before it was worked out. There 's a little yet. Of course, you know you won't get a red by tying up with the rice-bowlers, but it 's a job for life — if you behave."

"Huh! Yank," roared the Swede, peering at me through the smoke, "you get burn some, eh, playin' mit der monkeys in der jungle? Pretty soon you ban sunstroke. Here, I make you trade."

He pointed to the tropical helmet on the table before him.

"You 're on," I responded.

"He ban good hat," said Ole, proudly; "I get him last week from der Swede consul. Min he too damn big. What you give?"

For answer I tossed my cap across the table.

"Nah!" protested the Scandinavian, "I sell him for tventy cents or I take der cap an' vun coat."

I mounted to the floor above and returned with a cotton jacket that I had left in the keeping of Askins.

"How 's this?" I demanded.

"He ban all right," answered Ole, slipping into it; "der oder vas all broke by der sleeves."

I donned the helmet and strolled down to the landing jetty, where "the boys" were accustomed to gather of an evening to enjoy the only cool breeze that ever invaded Colombo. Few had been the changes in the beachcomber ranks during my absence. Amid the drowsy yarning there sounded often a familiar refrain: —"The circus is coming." No one knew just when; but then, one does n't worry in Ceylon. If he has n't rice, he eats bananas. If he can't find work, it is a joy merely to lie in the shade and breathe.

The publicity of the cricket grounds had led me to seek other sleeping-quarters. Opposite the shipping-office, in the heart of the European section, lay Gordon Gardens, a park replete with fountains, gay flower pots, and grateful shade. By day it was the rendezvous of the élite of the city, white and black. By night its gates were closed, and stern placards warned trespassers to beware. Small hin-

drance these, however, for in all Colombo I had no better friend than Bobby, who patroled the flanking street. Under the trees the night dew never fell, the ocean breeze laughed at the toil of the punkah-wallah, the fountains gave bath-room privileges, and prowling natives disturbed me no more; for Bobby was owl-eyed. This new lodging had but one drawback. I must be up and away with the dawn; for within pea-shooting distance of my chamber towered the White House of Ceylon, and Governor Blake was reputed an early riser and no friend of beachcombers.

One by one there drifted ashore in Colombo four fellow-countrymen, who, following my example, soon won for Gordon Gardens the sub-title "American Park Hotel." Model youths, perhaps, would have shunned this quartet, for each plead guilty to a checkered past. As for myself, I found them boon companions.

Henderson, the oldest, was a deserter from the Asiatic squadron. Arnold, middle-aged, laden with the spoils — in drafts — of a political career in New York, awaited in Ceylon the conclusion of the Japanese-Russian war before hastening to Port Arthur to open an American saloon.

Down at the point of the breakwater, where we were wont to gather often for a dip in the brine, I made the acquaintance of Marten. He was a boy of twenty-five, hailing from Tacoma, Washington. Arriving in the Orient some years before with a record as a champion swimmer, he had spent two seasons in diving for pearls on the Coromandel coast. Not one of the native striplings who surrounded each arriving steamer, clamoring for pennies, was more nearly amphibious than Marten. It was much more to watch his submarine feats than to swim that the beachcombers sallied forth each afternoon from their shady retreats.

We swam cautiously, the rest of us, for the harbor was infested with sharks. On the day after my arrival, the *Worcestershire* had buried in the European cemetery of Colombo the upper half of what had been one of my companions in the "glory-hole." The appearance of a pair of black fins out across the sun-flecked waters was certain to send us scrambling up the rough face of the breakwater.

But not so Marten. While we fled, he swam straight for the coming monsters of the deep. When they were almost upon him he dived with a shout of hilarity and a dash of foam into their very

The rickshaw men of Colombo

American wanderers who slept in the Gordon Gardens of Colombo. Left to right: Arnold, ex-New York ward heeler; myself; "Dick Haywood"; an English lad; and Marten of Tacoma, Washington

midst, to come to the surface smiling and unscathed, perhaps far out across the harbor, perhaps under our dangling feet. How he put the sharks to flight no man knew. The "gang" was divided in its opinion between the assertion of the swimmer himself that he "tickled 'em under the belly," and the conviction of Askins that he had merely to show them his face — for Marten was not afflicted with manly beauty.

The last member of our party was a bully born on the Bowery, younger in years than Marten, older in rascality than Henderson. As to his name, he owned to several, and assured us at the first meeting that "Dick Haywood" would do well enough for the time being. His chief claim to fame was his own assertion that he had escaped from Sing Sing after serving two years of a seven-year sentence. The story of his "get-away," with which he often entertained twilight gatherings on the jetty, smacked of veracity. For all an innate skepticism, I found no reason to disagree with the conclusion of the "gang" that his "song and dance" was true. Certainly there was no doubt among his most casual acquaintances of his ability to get into Sing Sing. He was clever enough, fortune favoring, to have broken out.

Fleeing his native land, Haywood had brought up in Bombay and, having enlisted in the British army, was assigned to a garrison in Rajputana. Obviously, so temperamental a youth must soon weary of the guard duty and pipe-clay polishing that make up the long, long Indian day of Tommy Atkins. He engineered a second "get-away." The enlistment papers and a buttonless uniform in his bundle certified to this adventure. In the course of time he reached Calcutta, chiefly through the fortune of finding himself alone in a compartment of the Northwest Mail with a Parsee merchant of more worldly wealth than physical prowess. A rumor of this escapade soon drove him to Madras. There his unconventional habits again asserted themselves and fortune temporarily deserted him. He was taken in the bazaars in the act of "weeding the leathers."

Once more he escaped, this time from a crowded court room, and finding India no longer attractive, turned southward to Ceylon, hoping to make a final "get-away" by sea.

Few of "the boys" gave credence to these last tales. But they were true. For a newcomer in the ranks reported on the day of his arrival, before he had laid eyes on the culprit, that Madras was

placarded with descriptions — they fitted Haywood exactly — of a man charged with desertion, robbery, pick-pocketing, and escape from custody.

Awaking penniless on the morning following my return from Kandy, I decided to investigate a charity system in vogue in British-India. Kind-hearted sahibs, members of a national association known as the "Friend-in-Need Society," maintain in the larger cities a refuge for stranded Europeans and Eurasians. Above the door of each Society building appear the initial letters of its title. The inventive wanderer, for other reasons than this, perhaps, has dubbed the kindly institution the "Finish."

In Colombo the Society offered only out-door relief, meal tickets distributed by its president or secretary. I found the first of these officials to be the youthful editor of Colombo's English newspaper, with offices a ship's length from Gordon Gardens. Tickets, however, had he none.

"This office was too blooming handy," he explained, throwing aside his blue pencil to mop his brow. "If the hooligans loafing in the Gardens or on the jetty had an idle hour on their hands, they spent it inventing tales and strolled up here to see how much they could get out of the Society by springing them on me. There was more than one of them, too, that I'd have taken on the staff if he could have dished up as good a yarn every week. But the thing got to be a fad, and, when I found that a couple of fellows that applied to me had their pockets full of dibs at the time, I decided to let the secretary, the Baptist minister, do the distributing. His parsonage is four miles from the harbor, and the man that will walk that far in Ceylon deserves all he can get out of him."

Far out beyond the leper hospital, where putrescent mortals peered dejectedly through the palings, I came upon the bungalow of the Reverend Peacock, set well back from the red highway in a grove of palms. Several old acquaintances, including Askins, had assembled. One of them stood abjectly, hat in hand, before the judgment-seat at the end of the veranda.

The secretary was a man of pugilistic build, with the voice of a side-show barker. His very roar seemed an assertion that he was an infallible judge of human nature. Yet, strangely enough, he treated most liberally the professional vagrants, and turned away empty-handed those whose stories were told stammeringly for want of

practice. Among those who appeared before him that morning, for example, were two grafters, Askins and myself; and an Italian sailor, really deserving of assistance.

The Irishman chose to state his case in the language of university circles.

"Surely," cried the reverend gentleman, in delight, "this must be the first time a man of your parts has found himself in this predicament?"

"Verily, yes, Reverend Peacock," quoth the learned son of Erin, with an unrestrainable sigh, "the first indeed. As I can't count the other times, they don't count," he murmured to himself. "It 's the asthma, reverend sir."

"I shall be glad to make yours a special case," said the secretary; "Step aside into my study."

I advanced to tell my tale and received eight tickets, twice the usual number. A moment later the Italian was driven from the parsonage grounds with the nearest approach to an oath that a minister is entitled to include in his vocabulary.

The tickets, worth four cents each, entitled the holder to as many meals of currie and rice, tea, bananas, and cakes in a native shop chosen by the Society; it was the poorest in town. A faulty management was suggested, too, by the fact that the proprietor was easily induced to make good the Society vouchers in a neighboring arrack-shop.

Three day later, as dawn was breaking, I climbed the fence of the "American Park Hotel" and strolled away to the beach for a dip in the surf. Breakfast would have been more to the point, but my last ticket was spent. One by one, "the boys," little suspecting that this was to prove the red-letter day of that Colombo season, turned back into the squat city; and as the sun mounted higher I retreated to the freight wharves, where the vague promise of a job had been held out to me the day before.

The dock superintendent was slow in coming. At ten o'clock I was still stretched out in the shade of his veranda, when I was suddenly aroused by a shout from the shore end of the pier. I sprang up to see the Swede struggling to keep a footing in the maelstrom of bullock carts, coolie carriers, and shrieking stevedores, and waving his arms wildly above his head.

"Circus!" he cried, "Der circus is coom, Franck! Creeket

ground!" and, turning about, he dashed off at a pace that is rarely equaled in Ceylon by white men who look forward to a long and active life.

I dived into the throng and fought my way to the gate. The Scandinavian was already far down the red driveway leading to the native section. Among such a company of out-of-works as graced Colombo at that season, there was small chance of employment to those who lingered. I dashed after the flying Norseman and overtook him at the entrance to the public playground.

A circus at the hour of its arrival presents a chaotic scene under the best of circumstances. When it has just disembarked from a sea voyage, in a land swarming with half-civilized brown men, its disorder is oppressive. The center of the cricket field was a wild confusion of animal cages, rolls of canvas, scattered tent poles, and all else that goes to make up a traveling menagerie, not forgetting those pompous persons whose hectic garb make them as effective advertising mediums as walking billboards.

At the moment, these romantic beings were doing garrison duty; for the recumbent circus was in a state of siege. Around it surged an ever-increasing multitude of natives, peering, pushing, chattering, falling back terror-stricken before the frenzied circus men who, armed with iron-headed tent stakes, charged back and forth across the space; but sweeping out upon the scattered paraphernalia again after each onslaught.

We battled our way into the inner circle and shouted an offer of our services to the blaspheming manager. He was a typical circus boss; Irish, of course, bullet-headed, of powerful build, and free of movement, with a belligerent cast of countenance that proclaimed his readiness to engage in a "scrap" at any time that he could find leisure for such entertainment. Tugging at a heap of canvas, he peered at us between his out-stretched legs, and shouted above the din of battle:—

"Yis, I want four min! White wans! Are you fellows sailors? There 's a hill of a lot o' climbin' to do."

"Both A. Bs.," I answered.

"All right! If ye want the job, bring two more."

We turned to scrutinize the sea of humanity about us. There was not a white face to be seen.

"Ve look by Almeida's!" shouted the Swede, as we charged the mob.

Before we could escape, however, I caught sight of a familiar slouch hat well back in the crowd, and a moment later Askins stood be-

side us. Behind him came Dick Haywood and, our squad complete, we dashed back to the boss.

"Well!" he roared, "I pay a quid a week an' find yerselves! Want it?"

"A pound a week," muttered Askins, "that 's more'n two chips a day. Aye! We 'll take it."

"All right! Jump onto that center pole an' get 'er up. If these niggers get in the way, brain 'em with a tent stake. Stip lively now!"

The upper canvas was soon spread and a space roped off. The boss tossed a pick-ax at me and set me to grubbing holes for the seat supports. Carefully and evenly I swung the tool up and down in an old maid's stroke. The least slip would have broken a Singhalese head, so closely did the natives press around me. To them the sight of a white man employed at manual labor was the source of as much astonishment as any of the wonders of the circus. Few, indeed, had ever before seen a European manipulating heavier tools than pen or pencil. Within an hour the news had spread abroad through the city that the circus had imported the novelty of the age, some "white coolies;" and all Colombo and his wife omitted the afternoon siesta and trooped to the cricket ground to behold this reversal of society.

The mob that I drove from hole to hole increased rapidly. My mates, carrying seat boards or sawdust for the ring, were as seriously handicapped. Haywood of the untamed temper, taking the caustic advice of the boss too literally, snatched up a tent stake and stretched two natives bleeding on the ground. Even that brought small relief.

Strange comments sounded in my ears; for the native who speaks English never loses an opportunity to display his learning. A pair at my elbow opened fire in the diction of schoolbooks: —

"This sight is to me astounding!" shrieked the high-caste youth to his older companion; "I have never before know that Europeans can do such workings."

"Why, indeed, yes!" cried the babu. "In his home the sahib does just so strong work as our coolies, but because he is play cricket and tennis he is doing even stronger. He is not rich always and sitting in shade."

"But do the white man not losing his caste when he is working like coolies?" demanded the youth. "Why is this man work at such? Is he perhaps prisoner that he disgraces himself lower than the keeper of the arrack-shop?"

"Truly, my friend, I not understand," admitted the older man, a bit sadly, "but I am reading that in sahib's country he is make the workings of coolie and yet is not coolie."

There were others besides the native residents whose attention was attracted to the "white coolies." Here and there in the crowd I caught sight of a European scowling darkly at us; just why, I could not guess, unconscious of having done anything to provoke the ill-will of my race. In due time, however, I learned the cause of their displeasure.

When night fell, all was in readiness for the initial performance; though at the cost of a day's work that we agreed could not be indulged in more than semi-annually, even for an inducement of "more than two chips." The tents, large and small, were stretched, the circle of seats complete. Rings, flying apparatus, properties, and lights were ready for use. A half-thousand chairs, reserved for Europeans, had been ranged at the ring side, the cage of the performing lion bolted together, and the ticket booth set up at the entrance. The boss gave vent to a final snarl, called a 'rickshaw, and drove off to his hotel for dinner. Luckily, Askin's credit was good in the favorite shop across the way. We ate our currie and rice quickly, and returned to stretch out on the grass at the players' entrance.

Our pipes were barely lighted when two Europeans, dressed in snow-white garments, stepped forward out of the darkness. We recognized in them two Englishmen connected with the Lipton Tea Company.

"It strikes me, me men," began one, in a high, querulous voice, "that you chaps should know better than to do coolie labor in sight of all the natives of the city."

"What 's that?" I cried, in my surprise, though I heard Askins chuckling behind me.

"I suppose you chaps have only come to Ceylon," suggested the other, in a more conciliatory tone. "You probably don't realize what a different world this is out here. You cawn't work at manual labor here, you know, the way you can in Hyde Park. Why, you will destroy the prestige of every white man on the island, if —"

"You 've stirred up a fine kettle of fish already," burst out the first speaker. "But Arthur, these chaps are not bank clerks. They cawn't understand the sowt of language you talk to your stenographer, you knoaw. They are only sailors. Let me tell them the trouble.

"Now look heah, me men. This awfternoon my Hindu servant stuck his head in at my office door, and shouted right out for me to go

to the cricket ground and see the sahib coolies. By four o'clock he was talking back every time I called him to do an errand. To-night, blawst me, he was so slow in filling my pipe that I had to chuck a boot at him. By to-morrow morning I suppose he 'll tell me to prepare me own bawth, bah Jove. This sort of thing, ye knoaw, is giving the natives the notion that they 're as good as Englishmen."

"Think you 'll find," said Askins, puffing slowly at his broken pipe, "if you reflect a bit, that this unwonted arrogance in the aborigines and the noticeable decrease in their respect for Europeans, which you attribute entirely to our alleged indiscretion, are very largely due to the recent victories of Japan over Russia."

The Swede snorted like a stalled winch. The boot-chucker peered through the darkness at the rags that covered Askins, M. A. Even "Arthur" could not suppress a chuckle at his companion's notion of a mere sailor's vocabulary. Before the other had recovered, he took up the broken thread of the sermon.

"Reginald is right, me men, all the same. Ye knoaw of all the castes out here only the very lowest work with their hands, and they are despised by every other class. Why, the lowest caste in Ceylon, ye knoaw, won't undertake our meanest labor. We have to send over for Tamil and Hindu coolies. Now the Englishmen are at the top of this caste system. The natives look up to us as above their highest caste. If this highest class, then, does labor that would degrade those of their lowest caste, you can see where their reverence for white men would soon go.

"Chaps have come out here at different times, missionaries especially, determined to treat the natives like equals, saying it was all rot and wrong to keep up this caste system. And they chatted with their servants, and patted the babies on the back, and sat at the same table with natives, and even planted their own gardens. And those who have n't got knives in their ribs for hoodooing the children are looked upon as insane or degenerate, or as men being punished for some crime. Why, if these people ceased to look upon us as their social superiors they 'd drive us into the sea in a month. If you chaps want to stop long in Colombo you 'd better drop this circus job."

"But if that 's all the work we can find on the whole blooming island?" I demanded.

"Work!" cried Reginald, excitedly, "Why, blawst it! Don't work! Better loaf than make us all lose caste with the natives."

"But if the wily chip continues to elude us?" drawled Askins.

"Eh!" gasped Reggie.

"I mean if the currie and rice refuse to come at our whistle?"

"Oah! Yeou mean if you have no money to buy food?"

"You 've hit it," replied the Dublin sage; "that 's the very idea."

"Why, blawst it, me man," shrieked Reggie, "don't you know there 's a Friend-in-Need Society in Colombo? What do you fawncy we contribute to it for? Now if you chaps don't stop disgracing all the —"

"What 's the bloody row?" growled a voice in the darkness.

Our employer loomed up out of the night.

"Oh! That 'll be all right," he asserted, in a soothing voice, when the controversy had been explained to him; "The tints is all up. T'night I 'll give these byes their uniforems, an' whinever the show is goin' on an' the niggers can see thim, they 'll wear thim."

"Uniforms!" cried the Englishmen. "That 's different, ye knoaw."

"Of course," continued Reggie, lighting a cigarette, "it will be all right with uniforms. When a man weahs a uniform, the natives think he is doing something they cawn't do, ye knoaw, and he keeps his cawste. Oah, yes, that 'll do very nicely, Mr. Manager. We 'll be off, then," and the pair tripped away into the night.

"Fitzgerald's Circus" was an Australian enterprise. Its personnel, from Fritz himself to the trick poodle, hailed from the little continent. In competition with the circuses of our own land this one-ring affair would have attracted small attention; but its annual circuit of Oriental cities, from Hong Kong to Bombay, was on virgin soil where the most stereotyped "act" was greeted with bursts of enthusiasm.

To us, surfeited and sophisticated beings from an unmarveling world, the sights of interest were in the amphitheater of benches rather than in the ring. The burners lighted, we dashed off to don our uniforms. These were light blue in color and richly trimmed with gold braid — things of glory above which even the bald crown of Askins and the straw-tinted thatch of the Swede inspired a deep Singhalese reverence. The designers of the garments, however, having in mind durability rather than the comfort of scores of annual wearers, had forced upon us a costume appropriate to the upper ranges of the Himalayas.

Our first uniformed duties were those of ushers, and between the appearance of the frightened vanguard of the audience and the first fanfare of the audacious "orchestra," life moved with a vim. The hordes that swarmed in upon us before the barker had concluded his first appeal comprised every caste of Singhalese society. Weighty problems

unknown to the most experienced circus man of the western world crowded themselves upon us, demanding instantaneous solution. A delegation of priests in cheese-cloth robes raised their shrill voices in protest because the space allotted them gave no room for their betel-nut boxes. Half-breeds shouted strenuous objections to being seated with natives. Merchants refused to enter the same section with shopkeepers. Shopkeepers were chary of pollution at the touch of scribes. Scribes cried out hoarsely at contact with laborers. Skilled workmen screamed in frenzy at every attempt to make place among them for mere coolies.

The lower the caste of the newcomer the more prolonged was the uproar against him, and the more vindictive his own disgust at his inferiors. The Hindu *sudra,* in his scanty loin-cloth, was abhorred of all, and shrank servilly behind the usher during the circuit of the tent, while each section in turn rose against him. The natives, for the most part, refused to sit as circus seats are meant to be sat on, but squatted obstinately on their heels, hugging their scrawny knees. Wily 'rickshaw runners could be kept from crawling in among the chairs only by extreme vigilance and occasional violence. Buxom brown women, caught in the crush of humanity, ran imminent peril of being separated from their loosely-fastened skirts, and through it all native youths from the mission-schools, swarmed round us, intent on displaying their " English " by asking useless and unanswerable questions.

The entrance of the European patrons, staid and pompous of demeanor, put the natives on their best behavior, and, with the appearance of the bicyclers for the first act, even the Eurasian forgot that the despised sudra sat under the same tent with him. The heterogeneous throng settled down into a motionless sea of strained, astonished faces. Fitzgerald sahib prided himself on the smooth manner in which his entertainment was run off, and to the four of us fell the task of supplying the oil to his circus machinery. The " Wonderful Cycle Whiz! Never Before Performed by Australians! Never! " once over, we had one minute to pull down the bicycle track and carry the heavily weighted sections outside the tent. While we lowered " Master Waldron's " trapeze with one hand, we placed and held the hurdles with the other. Tables and chairs for " Hadgie Tabor's Hand-Balancing Act! " must appear as if by magic. In breathless succession the trick ponies must be led on, the ring cleared for the performing elephant, set again for the " Astounding Jockey Act," and cleared for the " Hungarian Horses."

Then "Mlle. Montgomery," forgetting her bunion, capered into the glare of publicity in a costume that made even the tropically-clad Singhalese women gasp with envy. Most valiantly we struggled during her "Daring Equestrian Act!" to drop the streamers low on her horse's flanks, and to strike the fair equestrienne squarely on the head with our paper hoops; not so much from a desire to charm the audience with our dexterity as to escape the sizzling comments which the fairy-like "mademoiselle" flung back in snarling sotto voce at each blunderer.

Away with hoops and ribbons! Properties for the clown act! On the heels of the fools came that "Mighty Demonstration of Man's Power over FEROCIOUS BEASTS!" during which an emaciated and moth-eaten tiger, crouched on a horse, rode twice round the ring with the contrite and crestfallen countenance of a hen-pecked suburbanite who has returned home without recalling the reason for the knot in his handkerchief.

Ten minutes' intermission, that was no intermission for us, and there came more properties, hoops and rings of fire, tables and chairs, performing dogs to be held in leash, and a final act for which we set up the elephant's bicycle and drove the lion out for a spin on the huge animal's back. Had our uniforms been as airy as the raiment of the Hindu coolies slinking at the tail of the howling hordes that poured through the exit, our labyrinthian paths about the enclosure could easily have been traced by the streams of sweat left behind us. Even though our tasks were by no means ended with the performance, we rarely waited for the disappearance of the last stragglers to strip as far as unexacting Singhalese propriety would permit.

When the last property had been laid away, we arranged our beds by setting together several chairs chosen from the general havoc, and turned in. Unless we were disturbed by prowling natives, we even slept; though rarely all at once and never for an extended period.

The boss, during that strenuous first day, had promised us ample leisure when once the tents and cages were set up. Unfortunately, he forgot his promise. Each day we were stirring at dawn, and, after a banana and a wafer across the way, we fell to work. The benches, which the departing multitude had scattered pellmell in their dash for the cooler night outside, must be reset. The chairs of the sahibs, strewn about the ring like wreckage washed ashore, must be rearranged in symmetrical rows and decorated with ribbons. Cast-off programs, banana peelings, betel-nut leaves, and all the rubbish of a band of

merry-makers had to be picked up; the tent ropes "sweated" to keep them taut; the lion's cage minutely inspected; the ring resprinkled with sawdust and, a job abhorred, freshly whitewashed. Between these regular duties came a hundred and one chores of the boss's finding; and, whatever the task in hand, it must be interrupted ever and anon to throw tent stakes at the awe-stricken faces that peered through the openings in the canvas. Strange fortune if we were finished when the cry of "touch off the lights" sent us shinnying up the tent poles and ropes in Jack Tar fashion to kindle the gasoline burners. Not even the Reverend Peacock could have accused us, during those merry days, of living, like drones, on the industry of others.

Fitzgerald's Circus had been domiciled nearly a week in Colombo, when I was unexpectedly advanced from the position of a "swipe" to one of weighty importance. It was during an idle hour late one afternoon. The four of us were displaying our accomplishments in the deserted ring, when it was my good fortune, or bad, according to the individual point of view, to be detected by the ringmaster and the proprietor in the act of "doing a hand-stand." Certain so commonplace a feat in itself could not have attracted the attention the pair bestowed upon me, I regained my accustomed posture fully expecting to lose my cherished "quid a week" for this defilement of the sawdust circle. I waited contritely. The ringmaster looked me over with critical dispassion from my shorn head to my bare feet, turned his perpetual scowl on "Fitz" for a moment, and addressed me in the metallic voice of a phonograph: —

"Know any other stunts?"

Was the question meant seriously, or was this caustic sarcasm but a forerunner of my dismissal?

"One or two," I admitted.

"Where 'd ye learn 'em?" snapped the ringmaster.

I pleaded in exoneration a few years of gymnasium membership.

"Gymnasium on shipboard?" asked the owner.

"Why, no, sir, on land."

"Could you do a dive over that chair into the ring, a head-stand, a stiff-fall, and a roll-up?" rasped the ringmaster.

A chuckle and a snort sounded from my companions. Losing a job was, from their point of view, neither a disgrace nor a misfortune — merely a joke.

"Yes, sir, I can work those," I stammered.

"You 're a sailor?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then a few tumbles won't hurt you any. Can you hold a man of twelve stone on your shoulders?"

I made a brief mental calculation; twelve times fourteen — one hundred and sixty-eight pounds.

"Sure," I answered.

"Well," snapped the ringmaster, savagely, "I want you to go on for Walhalla's turn."

"Whaat!" I gasped; "Walha —!" In my astonishment I had all but taken to my heels. Walhalla and Faust were our two clowns, and the joy with which the antics of the pair were greeted by the natives kept them more in evidence than any other performer. My companions roared with delight at the fancied jest.

"Here! You swipes," cried the ringmaster, whirling upon them; "go over and brush the flies off that elephant! An' keep 'em brushed off! D'ye hear me!"

"Now, then, Franck," said the proprietor — this sudden rise in the social scale had given me even the right to be addressed by name — "Walhalla has a fever. Out for good, I suppose. Damn it, Casey!" turning to his right-hand man, "I 'm always losing my exhibits. Look at this trip! My best bare-back skirt dies of cholera in Singapore. My best cycler breaks his neck in Rangoon. The plague walks off with my best trap man in Bombay — damn the hole! Why in hell is it always the stars that go? Now it 's Walhalla. Five turns cut out already. If we lose any more, we 're done for. We can't, that 's all. Now —"

"But I 'm no circus man!" I protested, as his eye fell on me.

"Oh, hell!" said the ringmaster, "You 've been with us long enough to know Walhalla's gags, and you can work up the stunts in a couple of rehearsals."

"But there 's the violin act!" I objected, recalling a combination of alleged music and tumbling that always "brought down the house."

"We 'll have to cut that out. But you can put on the others."

"There 'll be ten chips a day in it," put in "Fitz," casually.

"Eh — er — ten rupees!" I choked. Self-respecting beachcomber though I was, I would have turned missionary at that price.

"All right, sir. I 'll make a try at it," I answered.

"Of course," said "Fitz." "Go and get tiffin and be back in half an hour. I 'll have Faust here for a rehearsal."

I sprang for an exit, but stopped suddenly as a thought struck me: —

The trick elephant of Fitzgerald's circus and a high-caste Singhalese with circle-comb

John Askins, M.A., who had been "on the road" in the Orient twenty years

"But say," I wailed, "we're aground! The clothes—!"

"Stretch a leg and get tiffin!" cried the ringmaster; "Walhalla's rags are all here."

From nightfall until the audience, which "Fitz" was holding back as long as possible, stormed the tent, I worked feverishly with Faust in perfecting "gags," tumbles, and the time-honored brands of "horse-play." When our privacy was invaded, I scurried away to the dressing-tent to be made up. Several long-established antics we were obliged to omit until the next day gave more opportunity for rehearsal; but the clouted audience was uncritical, the Europeans indifferent to "tommy-rot," and the performance passed with no worse mishap to the new member of the troup than one too realistic fall and an occasional relapse into seriousness.

Yet life as a circus clown was nothing if not serious — under the paint. The least difficult functions of this new calling were those executed in public. To strike "Mlle. Montgomery" squarely on the head with a paper hoop while holding one leg in the air, and to fall down from the imaginary impact with a whoop was as simple a matter as to do the same thing in all solemnity and the uniform of a "swipe." It was back in the dressing-tent, scraping dried paint off one side of my blistered countenance while my fellow fool daubed fresh colors on the other, jumping out of one ridiculous costume into one more idiotic, turning the place topsy-turvy in a mad scramble for a misplaced dunce cap or a lost slap-stick, that I began to lose my fascination for this honored profession. On those days when we favored Colomboans with two performances, there was little hilarity in the dethroned scaramouch who made his bed of chairs at the ring side. I wondered no more at the funereal countenance with which Walhalla had been wont to haunt our morning hours before the fever fell upon him.

One long week I wore the cap and bells on the cricket ground of Colombo. All good fortune, however, must have an end — even ten-rupee incomes for stranded wanderers. There dawned a day when our canvas dwelling came down by the run, and the mixed odor of sweat and sawdust was wafted away on the hot monsoon that sweeps across the playground of Ceylon. The season of Fitzgerald was over. The naked stevedores bundled into the ship's hold the chest that contained Walhalla's merry raiment as carelessly as they threw the sections of the lion's cage on top of it. On the forward deck the moth-eaten tiger peered through the bars at his native jungle behind the city, and rubbed a watery eye; at the rail an unpainted Faust stared

gloomily down at the churning screw. There were no tears shed by the united quartet that, from the far end of the breakwater, watched the circus sink hull-down on the southern horizon; but as we straggled back at dusk to join the beachcombers under the palms of Gordon Gardens, I caught myself feeling now and then in the band of my trousers for the sovereigns I had sewed there.

CHAPTER XIV

THREE HOBOES IN INDIA

THE departure of Ole for home as a consul passenger, closely followed by that of Askins for India, "ere his elusive chips made their escape," left me the oldest "comber" on the beach. That honor might quickly have fallen to the next of heir but for the pleading of a fellow-countryman; for the merry circus days had left me a fortune that would carry me far afield in the vast peninsula to the north. Marten of Tacoma, tally clerk of the British Steam Navigation Company, promised to secure me a place in the same capacity if I would delay my departure until pay day, that he might accompany me. I agreed, for the ex-pearl-fisher spoke Hindustanee fluently. Within an hour I was seated, notebook in hand, at the edge of a hatch of a newly arrived vessel, drawing four rupees a day and free from the dread of losing caste.

On the morning of April fourth, we took leave of the navigation company and, having purchased tickets on the afternoon steamer to Tuticorin, set out to bid farewell to our acquaintances in the city. The hour of sailing was close at hand when Haywood, the much-wanted, burst in upon us at Almeida's.

"I hear," he shouted, "that you fellows are off for India."

We nodded.

"I 'm going along," he announced.

Naturally, we scowled. But on what ground could we protest? One does not choose his fellow-passengers on an ocean voyage. Moreover, I owed the erstwhile resident of Sing Sing some consideration. For a week before, as we were leaving the favorite shop in Pettah, after a midnight lunch, a Singhalese, mad with hasheesh smoking, had sought a quarrel with us. Knowing the weakness of a native fist, I made no attempt to ward off a threatened blow. Before it fell, Haywood suddenly flung the screaming fellow into the gutter, and only then did I note that the hand I had thought empty clutched a long, thin knife.

We held our peace, therefore, resolving to shake off our unwelcome companion at the first opportunity, and, marching down to the quaran-

tine station, tumbled with a multitude of Indian coolies into a barge that soon set us on board the *S. S. Kasara.*

"You see," said Haywood, two hours later, pointing away to Ceylon hovering on the evening horizon, "if I 'd hung round that joint another week, I 'd been pinched sure. I got to get out of British territory, and with no show to ship out of Colombo, the only chance was to make a break through India. If I 'd come alone, I 'd 'ave been spotted. But with three of us I won't be noticed half as quick."

Suddenly a cabin door within reach of our hands opened, and into our midst stepped Bobby, in full uniform.

"What the devil!" I gasped, "Thought your beat was between the clock tower and the Gardens?"

Over Haywood's face had spread the hue of a shallow sea, and his lower jaw hung loose on its hinges.

"Aha! Bobs," grinned Marten, "doin' a skip act, eh? Well, I 'm mum."

"Skip bloody 'ell," snorted Bobby, "I 'm h'off to Madras to snake back a forger they 've rounded up there."

"Sure that 's all?" demanded my partner.

"Yep," smiled Bobs.

Haywood drew a deep breath and rose to his feet.

"By God, Bobs," he muttered, "do you want to give me heart-failure? Thought sure you was campin' on my trail."

"Naw," answered the policeman, "none o' the toffs in Colombo ayn't seen them notices yet. But you 'd best keep on the move."

The rumor that there were three white men "on deck with the niggers" soon found its way to the cabin, and brought down upon us a visitation that poor Jack Tar must often suffer in the Orient. He was a missionary from Kansas, stationed in the hills of Mysore. Marten and I, refusing to admit his assertion that, as sailors, we were, ex officio, drunken, dissolute, ambitionless louts, were cruelly abandoned to future damnation. But Haywood, who had been wondering till then where he could "raise the dust for an eye-opener in the morning," pleaded guilty to every charge and, in the course of a half-hour, was duly "converted."

"Do you men know why you have no money; why you must travel on deck with natives?" demanded the missionary, in parting. "It 's because you 're not Christians."

We might have pointed out that the Lascars chattering about the deck drew a monthly wage because they were Hindus. But why pro-

long the argument? Haywood had already pocketed the two rupees that made our toleration worth while.

We landed with Bobby in the early morning and bade him farewell sooner than we had expected. For a native on the wharf handed him a telegram announcing that the forger was already en route for Colombo in charge of a Madras officer. Tuticorin was an uninspiring collection of mud huts and reeking bazaars. Our halt there was brief. It would have been briefer had we not chanced to run across Askins. The erudite wanderer had stranded sooner than he had anticipated. I took pleasure in setting him afloat again, and caught the last glimpse of his familiar figure, beginning to bend a bit now under the weight of twenty years of "knocking about," as the train bearing us northward rumbled through the village.

Even the beachcomber does not walk in India. To ride is cheaper. Third-class fare ranges from two-fifths to a half a cent a mile, and on every train is a compartment reserved for "Europeans and Eurasians only," into which no native may enter on penalty of being frightened out of his addled wits by a bellowing official.

Descending at the first station to quench a tropical thirst, I was astonished to see Bobby peering out of a second-class window.

"I could n't read the bloody wire without me glasses," he confided, as I drew near, "an' I don't think I 'll be able to find 'em before this 'ere ticket 's run out. We don't git h'off fer a run up to Madras every fortn'ght, an' I ayn't goin' to miss this one."

As I turned back to join my companions, the missionary from Kansas appeared at the door of the same compartment. Evidently he had thought better of his heartless decision to leave me to perdition, for he flung the door wide open.

"Come and ride with me to the next station," he commanded; "I want to talk to you."

"I 'm third-class," I answered.

"Never mind," said the padre, "I know the guard."

Having no other plausible excuse to offer, I complied, and endured a half-hour sermon. Through it all, Bobby sat stiffly erect in his corner, for to my amazement the minister did not once address him.

"How 's this?" I demanded, as we drew into the first station. The Kansan was choosing some tracts from his luggage in the next compartment. "Why don't he try to convert you, being so good a subject?"

"'E did," growled Bobby, "bloody 'ell, 'e did. But I shut 'im off.

Told 'im I was one o' the shinin' lights o' the Salvation Army in Colombo. Blawst me h'eyes, why can't these padres sing their song to the niggers an' let h'onest Englishmen alone! One of 'em gits to wind'ard o' me every time I breaks h'out fer a little holidye."

Armed with the tracts, I returned to my solicitous companions and settled down to view the passing landscape. It bore small resemblance to that of Ceylon. On either hand stretched treeless flat-lands, parched and brown as Sahara, a desert blazed at by an implacable sun and unwatered for months. A few native husbandmen, remnant of the workers in abundant season, toiled on in the face of frustrated hopes, scratching with worthless wooden plows the arid soil, that refused to give back the seed intrusted to it. There is no sadder, more forlorn, more hopeless of human creatures than this man of the masses in India. His clothing in childhood consists of a string around his belly and a charm-box on his left arm. Grown to man's estate, he adds to this a narrow strip of cotton, tied to the string behind and hanging over it in front. Regularly, each morning, he draws forth a preparation of coloring matter and cow-dung — for the cow is a sacred animal — and daubs on his forehead the sign of his caste, but the strip of cotton he renews only when direst necessity demands. His home is a wretched mud hut, too low to stand in, where he burrows by night and squats on his heels by day. With the buoyant Singhalese he has little in common. Sad-faced ever, if he smiles there is no joy in the grimace. Enchained and bound down by an inexorable system of caste, held in the bondage of an enforced habit of mind, habitually overcome with a sense of his own inferiority, he is disgusting in his groveling.

A hundred miles north of the seacoast, we halted to visit the famous Brahmin temple of Madura. Haywood's interest in architecture was confined to such details as the strength and resistance of window bars, but he had developed a quaking fear of daytime solitude and would not be separated from us.

The temple served well as an introduction to the fantastic extravagance of Oriental building. Its massive outer walls inclosed a vast plot of ground. In the center, surrounded by a chaos of smaller edifices, rose the inner temple, its cone-shaped roof and slender domes a great field of burnished gold before which the eye quailed in the cutting sunlight. Above all, the four gateways to the inclosure challenged attention. Identical in form, yet vastly different in minor detail, they towered twelve stories above the lowly huts and swarming

bazaars of the city that radiates from the sacred area. Four thousand statues of Hindu gods — to quote mathematical experts — adorned each gateway, hideous-faced idols, each pouring down from four pairs of hands his blessing on the groveling humans who starved beneath.

Within the gates, under vaulted archways, swarmed multitudes; pilgrims in the rags of contrition, shopkeepers shrieking the virtues of their wares from their open booths, screaming vendors of trinkets, abject coolies cringing before their countrymen of higher caste, loungers seeking relief from the sunshine outside. A sunken-eyed youth wormed his way through the throng and offered us guidance at two annas. We accepted, and followed him down a branch passageway to the lead-colored pond in which unfastidious pilgrims washed away their sins; then out upon an open space for a nearer view of the golden roofs. High up within, whispered the youth, while Marten interpreted, dwelt a god; but we, as white men, dared not enter to verify the assertion.

We turned back instead to the quarters of the sacred elephants. Here seven of the jungle monsters, chained by a foot, thrashed about over their supper of hay in a roofless stable. They were as ready to accept a tuft of fodder from a heathen sahib as from the dust-clad faquir who had tramped many a burning mile to perform this holy act for the acquiring of merit. Children played in and out among the animals. The largest was amusing himself by setting the urchins, one by one, on his back. But in the far corner stood another that even the clouted keepers shunned. The most sacred of a holy troop, our guide assured us, for he was mad, and wreaked a furious vengeance on whomsoever came within reach of his writhing trunk. Yet — if the sunken-eyed youth spoke truly — it was no misfortune to have life crushed out by this holiest of animals. The coolie suffering that fate was reborn a farmer, the peasant a shopkeeper, the merchant a warrior. Was it satisfaction with their station in life or a weakness of faith? We noted that even the despised sudras avoided the far corner.

"And how about a white man?" asked Haywood.

"A sahib," said our guide, "when he dies, becomes a crow. Therefore are white men afraid to die."

We turned out again into the bazaars. Naked girls, carrying baskets, were quarreling over the offal of passing beasts. The façade of every hut was decorated with splashes of manure, each bearing the imprint of a hand. For fuel is there none in this treeless land, save bois de vache.

With nightfall, Haywood, promising to return quickly, set out to visit the missionaries of Madura, to each of whom the Kansan had given him a note. Before he rejoined us at the station he had succeeded in "raising the wind" to the sum of three full fares to the next city. Yet he sneered at our extravagance in purchasing tickets for a night ride, and, tucking away the "convert money" in the band of his tropical helmet, followed us out upon the platform. The train was crowded. A band of coolies, whom the station master, in the absence of white travelers, had thrust into the European compartment, tumbled out as rats scurry from a suddenly lighted room, and left us in full possession.

In India, as in Europe, tickets are not taken up on the train; they are punched at various stations en route by local officials, misnamed "collectors." The collectors, however, are commonly Eurasian youths, deferential to white men and no match in wits for beachcombers.

Having turned out the light in the ceiling of our compartment, we stretched out on the two wooden benches and laid plans for the morrow. At each halt Marten kept look-out. If the collector carried no lantern, Haywood had merely to roll under a bench until he had passed. At a whisper of "bull's-eye" our unticketed companion slipped through the opposite door, and watched the progress of the half-breed by peering under the train at his uniformed legs. Once he was taken red-handed. It was after midnight, and we had all three fallen asleep. Suddenly there came the rapping of a punch on the sill of the open window.

"Tickets, sahibs," said an apologetic voice.

"Say, mate," whispered Haywood, "I 'm on the rocks. Can't you slip me? Have a cigar."

The Eurasian declined the proffered stogie with a startled shake of the head, punched our tickets, and passed on without a word. Haywood sat on tenter-hooks for several moments, but the engine screeched at last, and he lay down again, vowing to wake thereafter at every halt.

We arrived at Trinchinopoly in the small hours and stretched out on a station bench to sleep out the night undisturbed. The chief of Haywood's difficulties, however, was still to be overcome, for the only exit from the platform was guarded by a Eurasian who was sure to call for tickets. It was Marten, given to sudden inspirations, who saved the day for the New Yorker. As we approached the gate, he

A Hindu of Madras with caste-mark, of cow-dung and coloring-matter, on his forehead

ran forward and, to my astonishment, attempted to force his way through it without producing his ticket.

"Here! Ticket, please, sahib," cried the Eurasian.

"Oh! Go to the devil!" growled Marten.

"Ticket! Where is your ticket? Stop!"

Marten pushed the collector aside and stepped out.

"Ah!" screeched the official, "I know! You have n't any ticket. You stole your ride. Come back, or I 'll call a policeman."

The man of inspiration sprang at the half-breed with a savage snarl and grasped him by the collar.

"What in hell do you mean by saying I have n't any ticket? I 'll break your head."

"But I know you have n't," persisted the collector, though somewhat meekly.

"Do you think that sahibs travel without tickets?" roared Marten, drawing the bit of cardboard from his pocket. "Take your bloody ticket, but don't ever tell a sahib again that he 's stealing his rides."

The Eurasian stretched out a hand to me, mumbling an apology, but was so overcome with fear and the dread of accusing another innocent sahib that Haywood stepped out behind us unchallenged.

We were waylaid by a peregrinating barber, and took turns in squatting on our heels for a quick shave and a slap in the face with a damp cloth. The service cost two pice (one cent). The barber was, perhaps, twelve years old, but an American "tonsorialist" would have gasped at the dexterity with which he manipulated his razor, as he would have wondered at several long, slim instruments, not unlike hat pins, which he rolled up in his kit as he finished. These were tools rarely employed on sahibs, but no native would consider a shave complete until his ears had been cleaned with one of them.

The city of Trichinopoly was some miles distant from the station. Though we were agreed that such action was the height of extravagance, we hailed a bullock cart and offered four annas for the trip to the town. An anna, let it be understood once for all, is the equivalent of the English penny. The cart was the crudest of two-wheeled vehicles, so exactly balanced on its axle that the attempt of two of us to climb in behind came near suspending the tiny, raw-boned bullock in mid-air. A screech from the driver called our attention to the peril of his beast, and under his directions we succeeded in boarding the craft by approaching opposite ends and drawing ourselves up simul-

taneously. The wagon was some four feet long and three wide, with an arched roof; too short to lie down in, too low to sit up in. One of us, in turn, crouched beside the driver on the knife-like edge of the head-board, with knees drawn up on a level with the eyes, clinging desperately to the projecting roof. The other two lay in close embrace within, with legs projecting some two feet behind.

The bullock was a true Oriental. After much urging, he set out at the mincing gait of a man in a sack-race — a lame man, of very limited vitality. A dozen heavy welts from the driver's pole and as many shrill screams urged him, occasionally, into a trot. But it lasted always just four paces, at the end of which the animal shook his head slowly from side to side, as though shocked at his unseemly conduct, and fell again into a walk. The cart was innocent of springs, the roadway an excellent imitation of an abandoned quarry. Our sweltering progress was marked by a series of shocks as from an electric battery.

Marten ordered the driver to conduct us to an eating-shop. The native grinned knowingly and turned his animal into a by-path leading to a sahib hotel. When we objected to this as too high-priced, he shook his head mournfully and protested that he knew of no native shop which white men might enter. We bumped by a score of restaurants, but all bore the sign "For Hindus Only."

At last, in a narrow alleyway, the bullock fell asleep before a miserable hut. The driver screeched, and a startled coolie tumbled out of the shanty. There ensued a heated debate in the dialect of southern India, in which Marten fully held his own. For a time, the coolie refused to run the risk of losing caste through our polluting touch, but the princely offer of three annas each won him over, and we disembarked, to squat on his creaking veranda.

The bullock cart crawled on. The coolie ran screaming into the hut and reappeared with three banana leaves, a wife, and a multitude of naked urchins, all but the youngest of whom carried a cocoanut shell filled with water or curries. These being deposited within reach, the native spread the leaves before us, and his better half dumped in the center of each a small peck of rice that burned our over-eager fingers. The meal over, we rose to depart; but the native shrieked with dismay and insisted that we carry the leaves and shells away with us, as no member of his family dared touch them.

We wandered on through the bazaars towards the towering rock at the summit of which sits Tommy Atkins, puffing drowsily at his pipe,

in utter indifference to the approach of that day when his soul, in punishment for eating of the flesh of the sacred cow, shall take up its residence in the body of a pig. Our dinner had been more abundant than substantial. Within an hour I caught myself eyeing the food spread out in the open booths on either side. There were coils of rope-like pastry fried in oil, lumps, balls, cakes of sweetmeats, *chapatties* — bread-sheets smaller and more brittle than those of the Arab — pans of dark red chillies, potatoes cut into small cubes and covered with a green curry sauce. The Hindu is as much given to nibbling as the Mohammedan. By choice, perhaps, he would eat seldom and heartily, but he lives the most literally from hand to mouth of any human creature, and no sooner earns a half-anna than he hurries away to sacrifice it to his ever-unsatisfied hunger. The coolie is rarely permitted to enter a Hindu restaurant, the white man never; and brief were the intervals during my wanderings in India that I lived on other fare than that of the low-caste native. The prices could not have been lower, but to eat of the messes displayed under the ragged awnings of Indian shops requires an imperturbable temperament, an unrestrainable appetite, and a taste for edible fire acquired only by Oriental residence.

There are caste rules, too, of which I was supremely ignorant when I dropped behind my companions and aroused a shopkeeper asleep among his pots and pans. For months I had been accustomed, in my linguistic ignorance, to pick out my own food; but no sooner had I laid hand on a sweetmeat than the merchant shot into the air with an agonized scream that brought my fellow-countrymen running back upon me.

"What 's the nigger bawling about, Marten?" demanded Haywood.

"Oh, Franck 's gone and polluted his pan of sweets."

"But I only touched the one I picked up," I protested, "and I 'm going to eat that."

"These fool niggers won't see it that way," replied Marten; "if you put a finger on one piece, the whole dish is polluted. He 's sending for a low-caste man now to carry the panful away and dump it. Nobody 'll buy anything while it stays here."

The keeper refused angrily to enter into negotiations after this disaster and we moved on to the next booth. Under the tutelage of Marten, I stood afar off and pointed a respectful finger from one dish to another. The proprietor, obeying my orders of "ek annika do, cheh pisika da" (one anna of that, six pice of this) filled several canoe-

shaped sacks made of leaves sewn together with thread-like weeds, and, motioning to me to stand aloof, dropped the bundles into my hands, taking care to let go of each before it had touched my palm.

Go where we would, the cry of pollution preceded us. The vendor of green cocoanuts entreated us to carry away the shells when we had drunk the milk; passing natives sprang aside in terror when we tossed a banana skin on the ground. The seller of water melons would have been compelled to sacrifice his entire stock if one seed of the slice in our hands had fallen on the extreme edge of the banana leaf that covered his stand.

As we turned a corner in the crowded market place, Haywood, who was smoking, accidentally spat on the flowing gown of a turbaned passer-by.

"Oh! sahib!" screamed the native, in excellent English, "See what you have done! You have made me lose caste. For weeks I may not go among my friends nor see my family. I must stop my business, and wear rags, and sit in the street, and pour ashes on my head, and go often to the temple to purify myself."

"Tommy-rot," said Haywood.

But was it? Certainly not to the weeping Hindu, who turned back the way he had come.

These strange superstitions make India a land of especial hardship to the white vagabond "on the road." He is, in the natural course of events, as safe from violence as in England; but once off the beaten track he finds it difficult to obtain not only food and lodging, but the sine qua non of the tropics — water. In view of this fact the rulers of India have established a system which, should it come to his ears, would fill the American "hobo" with raging envy. The peninsula, as the world knows, is divided into districts, each governed by a commissioner and a deputy commissioner. Except in isolated cases, these executives are Englishmen, of whom the senior commonly dwells in the most important city of his territory, and the deputy in the second in size. The law provides that any penniless European shall, upon application to any one of these governors, be provided with a third-class railway ticket to the capital of the next district, and also with "batter" — money with which to buy food — to the amount of one rupee a day. The beachcomber who wanders inland, therefore, is relayed from one official to another, at the expense of the government, to any port which he may select. This ideal state of affairs is well known to every white vagrant in India, who takes it duly into account, like every

Hindus of all castes now travel by train

"Haywood" snaps me as I am getting a shave in Trichinopoly

published charity, in summing up the ways and means of a projected journey.

Not many hours after our arrival in Trichinopoly, Marten had "gone broke." The four rupees a day of a tally clerk was a princely income in the Orient; but the ex-pearl-fisher was imbued with the adventurer's philosophy that "money is made to spend," and as the final act of a day of extravagance had tossed his last anna to an idiot roaming through the bazaars. Haywood was anxious to "salt down" the rupees in his hat band, I to make the acquaintance of so important a personage as a district commissioner. Thus it happened that as noonday fell over Trichinopoly, three cotton-clad Americans emerged from the native town and turned northward towards the governor's bungalow.

Heat waves hovered like fog before us. Here and there a pathetic tree cast its slender shadow, like a splash of ink, across the white highway. A few coolies, their skins immune to sunburn, shuffled through the sand on their way to the town. We accosted one to inquire our way, but he sprang with a side jump to the extreme edge of the roadway, in terror of our polluting touch.

"Commissioner sahib keh bungalow kéhdereh?" asked Marten.

"Hazur hum malum neh, sahib (I don't know, sir)," stammered the native, backing away as we approached.

"Stand still, you fellows," shouted Marten; "you 're scaring him so he can't understand. Every nigger knows where the commissioner lives. Commissioner sahib keh bungalow kéhdereh?"

"Far down the road, oh, protector of the unfortunate."

We came upon the low rambling building in a grove among rocky hillocks. Along the broad veranda crouched a dozen punkah-wallahs, pulling drowsily at the cords that moved the great velvet fans within. Under the punkahs, at their desks, sat a small army of native officials, mere secretaries and clerks, most of them, yet quite majestic of appearance in the flowing gowns, great black beards, and brilliant turbans of the high-class Hindu. Servants swarmed about the writers, groveling on their knees each time a social superior deigned to issue a command. White men were there none.

The possessor of the most regal turban rose from his cushions as we entered and addressed us in English: —

"Can I be of service to you, sahibs?"

"We want to see the commissioner," said Marten.

"The commissioner sahib," replied the Hindu, "is at his bunga-

low. He will perhaps come here for a half hour at three o'clock."

"But we want tickets for the one o'clock train," Haywood blurted out.

"I am the assistant commissioner," answered the native. "What the commissioner sahib can do I can do. But it is a very long process to draw upon the funds of the district, and you cannot, perhaps, catch the one o'clock train. Still, I shall hurry as much as possible."

In his breathless haste he resumed his seat, carefully folded his legs, rolled a cigarette with great deliberation, blew smoke at the punkahs for several moments, and, pulling out the drawers of his desk, examined one by one the ledgers and documents within them. The object of his search was not forthcoming. He rose gradually to his feet, made inquiry among his hirsute colleagues, returned to his cushions, and, calling a dozen servants around him, despatched them on as many errands.

"It 's the ledger in which we enter the names of those who apply for tickets," he explained, "it will soon be found"; and he lighted another cigarette.

A servant came upon the book at last — plainly in sight on the top of the assistant's desk. That official opened the volume with unnecessary reverence, read half the entries it contained, and, choosing a native pen, prepared to write. He was not amusing himself at our expense. He was fully convinced that he was moving with all possible celerity.

Slowly his sputtering pen rendered into the crippled orthography of his native tongue comprehensive biographies of the two mythological beings whom Marten and Haywood chose to represent; and the writer turned to me. I protested that I intended to buy my own ticket; but the assistant, regarding me, evidently, as an accessory before the fact, insisted that the story of my life must also adorn the pages of his ledger. The entry completed, he laid the book away in a drawer, locked it, and called for a time-table.

"The third-class fare to Tanjore," he mused, "is twelve annas. Two tickets will be one and eight. Batter for a half-day for two, one rupee. Total, two rupees and eight annas. I shall now draw upon the treasurer for that amount," and he dragged forth another gigantic tome.

"Tanjore?" cried Marten. "Why, that ain't fifty miles from here! Is that as far as you 're going to ship us?"

"A commissioner lives there," replied the Hindu, "and he will send

you on. Each district is allowed to spend only enough for a ticket to the next one."

"If we have to go through this every forty miles," groaned Marten, "we'll die before we get anywhere."

"Let's try the commish," suggested Haywood; "where's his joint?"

The assistant pointed at the back door, and we struck off through the rock-strewn grove. On the way, Marten fell victim to another inspiration.

"I've got it!" he crowed, as we came in sight of the bodyguard of servants, flitting in and out among the plants and vines of the commissioner's veranda, "Just watch my smoke."

A native conducted us into a broad, low room, richly furnished and cooled by rhythmically moving punkahs. The governor of the district was a very young man, the junior, perhaps, of some of our trio. He bade us be seated, ordered a servant to bring us cooling drinks, and, when they were served, signified his readiness to hear our story. Marten stepped forward and, assuming the attitude of an orator on whose word hangs the fate of nations, proceeded to trot out the inspiration.

"We have come to you, Mr. Commissioner," he began, "because we must be in Madras to-morrow morning, and we can't make it unless we go through on the one o'clock train. We're seamen, sir, from a tramp that tied up in Colombo last month. A couple of nights ago we got shore leave and went for a cruise around the city. The skipper told us to be on board at midnight. We landed on the wharf at eleven, an' paid off our 'rickshaws an' yelled for a sampan. But blast me eyes, sir, if she was n't gone! She 'd pulled 'er mud-hook at ten o'clock, sir, we found out, an' was off two hours before the skipper told us to come back, an' we was left on the beach. We knowed she was makin' fer Madras, so we comes over to Tuticorin an' started to catch 'er. She 'll be off to-morrow morning for 'ome, an' if we don't make 'er we 'll be left on the beach, an' all our clothes is on board, sir. One of us "— pointing at me —" 'as dibs enough to take 'im through, but the assistant commissioner won't give us two tickets only to Tanjore, an' eight annas batter, an' if we stop in every district it 'll take a week to get there, an' cost the gover'ment a lot o' batter. Could n't you give us a ticket straight through, sir, so's we can make 'er, an' all our clothes an' papers is on board, sir."

"Are you sure your captain will let you back on board?" asked the commissioner.

"Sure," cried Marten and Haywood as one man.

The Englishman snatched an official sheet from a drawer, scrawled a few lines on it, and handed it to our spokesman.

"Here 's an order for through tickets and a day's batter," he said. "Hurry down to the office and give it to my assistant."

The Hindu force was dismayed at the note. The assistant scanned the signature suspiciously, while secretaries and clerks crowded around him.

"Why, that will be nearly ten rupees!" gasped an official, perusing the time-table.

"I wonder," mused the assistant, "has the commissioner sahib power to grant such an order?"

The force did not know. There were few things of importance, apparently, that it did know; but the haste with which it abandoned more irksome duties and fell to pulling out ponderous volumes proved that it was eager to learn.

"Yes, here it is," sighed the senior officer at last, pointing out a page to his colleagues, "'within the discretion of the commissioner.'"

"Well, julty karow!" shouted Marten.

There is, you see, a Hindu equivalent for "hurry up." Philologists have noted it, translators have found it valuable, natives use it to interpret the expression that falls so often from sahib lips. But the records make no mention of a man who has induced a Hindu actually and physically to julty karow.

"Come," urged Haywood, "we want to make the one o'clock train."

"I will hurry," promised the assistant, transforming his turban into a sheet and gravely rearranging it. "I shall now make out the order."

"But give us the tickets and cut out the red tape," growled Marten.

"Oh, sahib, that is impossible," gasped the Hindu. "I must make out the order and send it to the secretary to be sealed. Then it will go to the treasurer, who will make a note of it and send it to the auditor to be stamped and signed. Then it will be returned to the treasurer, who will file it and make out a receipt to send back to the secretary, who will send it to me to be signed, and the auditor —"

But Marten had fled through the back door and we dashed after him.

"You know," said the commissioner, as he finished writing a second note, "you can't hurry the Aryan brown. Kipling has written four

lines that cover the subject. I've told them to give you the tickets at once and look up the law afterward. But you probably cannot catch the one o'clock train. There is, however, a night express that reaches Madras in the morning, and you may take that, even though there is an excess fare, if they cannot get you off by the other."

The second note demoralized the force. Urged on by the threat of new expenditures, the assistant strove bravely for once against his lethargic Oriental nature. But hurry he could not, from lack of practice. His pen refused to write smoothly, the treasurer's keys were out of place, and, when found, refused to fit the lock of the strong box. The senior gave up at last, and, promising that a secretary would meet us at the station in the evening with the higher-priced tickets, bade us good day.

As we rose to depart, Marten asked for water. The high-caste officials scowled almost angrily at the request; they cried out in horrified chorus when Haywood stepped towards a chettie in the corner of the room.

"Don't touch that, sahib!" shrieked the assistant; "I shall arrange to give you a drink."

He spoke like a man on whom had suddenly fallen the task of launching a first-class battleship. One can smile with indulgence at the naked, illiterate coolie who clings to the silly superstitions of caste. The ignorance and sterility of a brain weakened by centuries of habitual desuetude pardons him. But to see educated, full-grown men among men descend to the fanatical childishness of ridiculous customs seems, in this twentieth century, the height of absurdity.

Among the servants within the building were none low enough in caste to be assigned the task of bringing us water. The assistant sent for a punkah-wallah. One of the great folds of velvet fell motionless and there sneaked into the room the most abject of human creatures. A curt order sounded. The sudra dropped to a squat, raised his clasped hands to his forehead, and shuffled off towards the chettie. Certainly, had he had a tail it would have been close drawn between his legs.

Picking up a heavy brass goblet, he placed it, not on the table, but on the floor in the middle of the room. The officials nearest the blighted spot abandoned their desks, and the entire company formed a circle around us. Haywood stepped forward to pick up the cup.

"No, no," cried the force, "stand back!"

The coolie slunk forward with the chettie and, holding it fully two

feet above the goblet, filled the vessel, and drew back several paces.

"Now you may drink," said the assistant.

"Do you want more?" he asked, when the cup was empty.

"Yes."

"Then leave the lota on the floor and stand back."

The punkah-wallah filled it as before.

"Good day," repeated the assistant, when we acknowledged ourselves satisfied, "but you must carry the lota away with you."

"But it costs a good piece of money," suggested Haywood.

"Yes," sighed the Hindu, "but no one dares touch it any more."

A native clerk met us on the station platform at nightfall, with tickets and "batter." On the express that thundered in a moment later were two European compartments; but Haywood was roused to the virile profanity of the Bowery at finding one of them occupied by natives. At the climax of an aria that displayed to advantage his remarkable vocabulary of execrations, a deep, solemn bass sounded from the next compartment:—

"Young man! Have you no fear of the fires of hell?"

"Oh! Lord!" gasped Marten, "Another padre!"

"Will you drive these niggers out of here!" screamed Haywood to a passing guard.

"Take the next compartment behind," answered the official, over his shoulder; "There's only one man in it."

"Yes! But he's a missionary!" bawled Marten.

The guard was gone. The station master gave the signal for departure and we boarded the express with a sigh of resignation. Haywood swore to wait for the next train rather than endure a sermon; but the fear of being left behind fell upon him, and, as the engine screeched, he scrambled through the door after us.

The sermon was immediately forthcoming, and the information we gleaned anent the future dwelling-place of blasphemous seamen was more voluminous than encouraging. Luckily, towards midnight the missionary exhausted both his text and his voice, and left us to enjoy such sleep as the ticket punchers permitted.

In Haywood, as in others of his ilk, neither the Hindu nor his institutions awakened any noticeable degree of respect. To him all natives, from Brahmins to sudras, were "niggers," and such of their customs as did not conform to the standards set up in the vicinity of Mulberry Bend he branded "damn nonsense." He was a graduate of a school in which differences of opinion are decided in favor of the

The Hindu affects many strange coiffures. Natives of Madras

A Hindu basket-weaver of Madras

disputant first able to crawl to his feet at the end of the controversy. Nay, more: he had won public recognition in that brand of oratory, and had long since outgrown the notion that there was any court of last appeal other than a "knock-out." There were several little points on which Marten and I should have been convinced in spite of our better judgment had not a cruel fate enrolled the New Yorker in the welter-weight class.

Now the Hindu has never been able to see what advantage or satisfaction arises from marring the visage of an enemy. He takes great joy in giving a foe unpleasant information concerning the doings of his ancestors back to the sixth generation, in carrying off his wife, or in gathering together a band of friends to accuse him in court of some atrocious crime. But his anger rarely expresses itself in muscular activity.

"When a sahib becomes angry," a babu once confided to me, "he goes insane. He loses his mind and makes his hands hard and pushes them often and swiftly into the face or the stomach of the other man, or makes his feet go against him behind. It is because he is crazy that he does such foolish things, that have not something to do with the thing that has made him angry."

Having no fear, therefore, of being repaid in his own coin, Haywood had contracted the pleasant little habit of "beating up" a native on the slightest provocation. Such conduct, of course, is not confined to beachcombers. Many a European hotel in the Orient displays conspicuous placards politely requesting guests not to beat or kick the servants; but to make their complaints to the manager.

Beyond the shadow of a doubt, the Hindu heartily deserves an occasional chastisement. The subtle ways in which he can annoy a white man without committing an act that can legally be punished, transcend the imagination of the Western mind. For centuries past, too, the sahib has been permitted to defend himself against such persecution after the orthodox manner of the Occident. But the good old days, alas, are gone. A very few years ago an act was passed making assault upon a native a crime. The world outside credited it to the humanity of Lord Curzon. Residents within the country whisper that an overwhelming desire to win the good will of the natives had its rise at the moment when a certain great European power began to gaze longingly from its bleak steppes in the north upon this vast peninsula below the Himalayas. The Hindu, of course, has not been slow to realize his new power. Slap a native lightly

in the face, and the probability is that he will appear in court to-morrow with a lacerated and bleeding countenance and a score of friends prepared to swear on anything from the Vedas to the ashes of a sacred bull that you inflicted the injury.

Haywood was fully cognizant of this state of affairs. Certainly it would have been wisdom, too, on the part of one anxious to pass through India as unostentatiously as possible to have endured an occasional petty annoyance, rather than to attract attention by resenting it. But endurance was not Haywood's strong point, and a score of times we felt called upon to warn him that his belligerency would bring him to grief.

In the early morning after our departure from Trichinopoly, the prophecy was fulfilled. The express stopped at a suburban station of Madras, and Haywood beckoned to a vendor of bananas on the platform. Now the youths of India are wont to gamble with bananas, because matches are too costly, and we were not surprised that the New Yorker blazed up wrathfully when the hawker demanded two annas for four.

He paid the exorbitant price under protest, and settled down to break his fast. The fruit, however, proved to be long past the stage when it could appeal to a sahib taste, and the purchaser rose to shake his fist at the deceitful vendor. The shadow of a derisive grin played on the features of the native; the thumb of his outspread hand hovered, entirely by accident, around the end of his nose; and he fell to chanting a ditty that a man ignorant of the tongue of Madras would have considered quite harmless.

"He says," interpreted Marten, "that your grandfather was the son of a pig, and fed your father on the entrails of a yellow dog; that your grandmother gave birth to seven puppies, and your mo—"

But Haywood had snatched open the door, and, before the terrified native could move, he "made his foot go against him behind" in no uncertain manner. The Hindu shrieked like a lost soul thrown into the bottomless pit, abandoned his basket, and ran screaming down the platform.

Barely had the New Yorker regained his seat when a native officer appeared at the window.

"What for you strike the coolie?" he stammered, angrily; "You come with me! I arrest you," and he attempted to step into the compartment.

"Oh, rot!" shouted Marten, "*you* arrest a white man! Get out of here or I 'll break your neck."

The policeman tumbled out precipitately.

"Don't let him bother you, Haywood," went on my partner. "Make him get a white cop if he wants to arrest you."

"Huh! Don't imagine for a minute any nigger is going to pinch *me*," snorted the New Yorker, settling down and lighting his pipe.

"I 'll get you a white policeman," screamed the officer, "down at the Beach station, and I 'll ride there with you."

He stepped up on the running board once more.

"You 'll ride with the rest of the niggers," roared Marten. "This compartment is reserved for Europeans."

The officer was fully aware of that fact. He stepped into the next compartment and, ordering the natives who had been peering at us over the top of the partition to sit down, glued his eyes upon us. The train went on. As far as the next station, Haywood laughed at the threat of arrest on so slight a charge. Before we had reached the second, he had grown serious, and, as we drew near the third, he addressed us in an undertone: —

"Say! I 'm going to let this fellow pinch me."

"What!" whispered Marten, "you 're a fool! A nigger policeman can't arrest a white man!"

"He can if the white man lets him," retorted Haywood. "There 's always a bunch of Bobbies at the Beach station and any white cop in Madras would recognize me, an' they 'd hand me out about five years of the lock-step. One of you claim my bundle 's yours, an' take it an' this note from the padre to the Christer it 's addressed to, an' leave 'em there."

"Heh, you," he called to the officer above us; "if you want to run me in I 'll go along."

The officer came near smiling. What native would not have envied him the honor of conducting a sahib to a police station? I swung the New Yorker's bundle over my shoulder and we stepped out. The policeman walked at a respectful distance from his prisoner and led the way across the Maidan. Three furlongs from the railway, he entered the yard of a small, brick cottage, framed in shrubbery and flowers, and, opening the door for Haywood, closed it in our faces.

We turned away towards the Y. M. C. A. building, an imposing modern edifice that housed the addressee of Haywood's note.

"I'll pick you up again in a day or two," said Marten, at the foot of the steps. "I've got an uncle living in town with a nigger wife, and I always touch him for a few good meals when I land here."

The association manager consented to take charge of Haywood's bundle, and offered me one night's lodging until I could "look around." I accepted gladly, though there were still four sovereigns in the band of my trousers. Force of habit led me down to the harbor; but, as I anticipated, I ran no danger of employment in that quarter. The boarding-houses swarmed with native seamen, and the shipping master had not signed on a white sailor in so long that he had concluded the type was extinct. I drifted away into the bazaars and, turning up at the association building at nightfall, retreated to a veranda of the second story with a blanket supplied by the manager.

CHAPTER XV

THE WAYS OF THE HINDU

IT was my good fortune to find employment the next morning. The job was suggestive of the spy and the tattle-tale, but the most indolent of vagabonds could not have dreamed of a more ideal means of amassing a fortune. I had merely to sit still and do nothing — and draw three rupees a day for doing it. Almost the only condition imposed upon me was that the sitting must be done on a street car.

Let me explain. The electric tramways of the city of Madras are numerous and well-patronized. The company does not dare to entrust the position on the front platform to aborigines; for in case of emergency the Hindu has a remarkable faculty of being anywhere but at his post, and of doing anything but the right thing. But as conductor, a native or Eurasian of some slight education does as well as a real man. He has only to poke the pice and annas into the cash register he wears about his neck and punch and deliver a ticket. Yet it is surprising, nay, sad, to find how many accidents befall him while engaged in this simple task. He will forget, for instance, to give the passenger the ticket that is his receipt for fare paid; coppers will cling tenaciously to his fingers in spite of his best efforts to dislodge them; he has even been known, in his absent-mindedness, to overlook his friends on his tour of collection through the car. Don't, for a moment, fancy that he is dishonest. It is merely because he is a Hindu and was born that way.

To correct these unimportant little faults, the corporation has a force of inspectors, occasionally sahibs, commonly Eurasians, clad in khaki uniforms and armed with report pads, who spring out unexpectedly from obscure side streets to offer expert assistance to passing conductors.

But, of course, mathematical experts do not dodge in and out of the sun-baked alleyways of Madras for the good of their health. The spirit of India is sure to attack them sooner or later, even if it has not been with them since birth. Cases of friendship between in-

spectors and conductors are not unknown, and it is not the way of the Oriental to attempt to reduce his friend's income. In short, the auditors must be audited, and, all unknown to them or its other servants, the corporation employs a small select band of men who do *not* wear uniforms, and who do *not* line up before the wicket on pay day.

It was by merest chance that I learned of this state of affairs and found my way to a small office that no one would have suspected of being in any way connected with the transportation system of Madras. An Englishman who was ostensibly a private broker deemed my answers to his cross-examination satisfactory, and I was initiated at once into the mysterious masonry of inspector of inspectors. The broker warned me not to build hopes of an extended engagement, rather to anticipate an early dismissal; for the uniformed employés were famed for lynx-eyed vigilance, and my usefulness to the company, obviously, could not endure beyond the few days that might elapse before I was "spotted." He did not add that a longer period might give me opportunity to form too intimate acquaintances, but he wore the air of a man who had not exhausted his subject.

My duties began forthwith. The Englishman supplied me with a handful of coppers that were to return to the corporation through its cash registers. I was to board a tramway, find place of observation in a back seat, and pay my fare as an ordinary passenger. The distance I should travel on each car, the routes I should follow, my changes from one line to another, were left to my own discretion. Upon alighting, I was to stroll far enough away from the line to allay suspicion and return to hail another car. The company required only that I make out each evening, in the private office, a report of my observations, with the numbers of the cars, and sign a statement to the effect that I had devoted the eight hours to the interests of the corporation. What could have been more entirely mon affaire? If there was a nook or corner of Madras that I did not visit during the few days that followed, it was not within strolling distance of any street-car line.

Among the sights of the city must be noted her human bullocks. Horses are rare in Madras. The transportation of freight falls to a company of leather-skinned, rice-fed coolies whose strength and endurance pass belief. Their carts are massive, two-wheeled vehicles, as cumbersome as ever burdened a yoke of oxen. The virtues of axle-grease they know not, and through the streets of Madras resounds a

droning as of the Egyptian sakkas on the plain of Thebes. Yet two of these emaciated creatures will drag a wagon, laden with great bales from the ships, or a dozen steel rails, for miles over hills and hollows, with fewer breathing spells than a truckman would allow a team of horses.

My devotion to corporate interests brought me the surprise supreme of my Oriental wanderings. At the corner of the Maidan, where the tramway swings round towards the harbor, a gang of coolies was repairing the roadway. That, in itself, was no cause for wonder. But among the workmen, dressed like the others in a ragged loin-cloth, swinging his rammer as stolidly, gazing as abjectly at the ground as his companions, was a white man! There could be no doubt of it. Under the tan of an Indian sun his skin was as fair as a Norseman's, his shock of unkempt hair was a fiery red, and his eyes were blue! But a white man ramming macadam! A sahib so unmindful of his high origin as to join the ranks of the most miserable, the most debased, the most abhorred of human creatures! To become a sudra and ram macadam in the public streets, dressed in a clout! Here was the final, lasciate ogni speranza end. A terror came upon me, a longing to flee while yet there was time, from the blighted land in which a man of my own flesh and blood could fall to this.

Again and again my rounds of the city brought me back to the corner of the Maidan. The renegade toiled stolidly on, bending dejectedly over his task, never raising his head to glance at the passing throng. Twice I was moved to alight and speak, to learn his dreadful story, but the car had rumbled on before I gathered courage. Leaving the broker's office as twilight fell, I passed that way again. A babu loitering on the curb drew me into conversation and I put a question to him.

"What! That?" he said, following the direction of my finger. "Why, that's a Hindu albino."

I turned away to an eating-shop, the proprietor of which had long since alienated his fellow-countrymen by professing conversion to Christianity, and sat down for supper. It was the official "bums' retreat" of Madras. A half-dozen white wanderers were gathered. I looked for Marten among them; but he had found pleasure, evidently, in the company of his chocolate-colored cousins, and when the last yarn was spun he had not put in an appearance. I stepped out again into the night to find a lodging.

Had I imagined that I alone, of all Madras, was planning to sleep

beneath the stars, I should have been doomed to disappointment. For an hour I roamed the city, seeking a bit of open space. If there was a passageway or a platebande too small to accommodate a coolie or a street urchin, it was occupied by a mongrel cur. The night was black. There was danger of running upon some huddled family in the darkness, and the pollution of touch might prove mutual. I left the close-packed town behind and struck off across the Maidan. Here was room and to spare; but the law forbade, and if officers did not enforce the ordinance, sneak thieves did — Hindu thieves who can travel on their bellies faster than an honest man can walk, making less noise than the gentle southern breeze, and steal the teeth from a sleeper's mouth and the eyes from under his lids ere he wakes. I kept on, stumbling over a knoll now and then, falling flat in a dry ditch, and fetching up against a fence. Groping along it, I came upon the highway that leads southward along the shore of the sea. A furlong beyond was a grove of high trees, with wide-spreading branches, like the pine; and beneath them soft beach sand. I halted there. A landward breeze had tempered the oppressive heat; the boughs above whispered hoarsely together. At regular intervals through the night, the sepulchral voice of the Bay of Bengal spoke faintly across the barren strand.

When I awoke, it was broad daylight, and Sunday. The day of rest brings small change to the teeming hordes of India, but conductors and inspectors were permitted to whisper together unobserved, and I took advantage of the holiday to put my wardrobe in the hands of a *dhoby*. A dhoby, in any language but Hindustanee, is a laundryman. But the word fails dismally as a translation. Within those two syllables lurks a volume of meaning to the sahib who has dwelt in the land of India. The editors of Anglo-Indian newspapers, who may only write and endure, are undecided whether to style him a fiend or a raving maniac. Youthful philosophers and poets, grown eloquent under the inspiration of a newly returned basket, fill more columns than the reporter of the viceroy's council.

For the dhoby is a man of energy. High above his head, like a flail, he swings each streaming garment and brings it down on his flat stone as if his principal desire in life were to split it to bits. Not once, but as long as strength endures, and when he can swing no more he flings down the tog and jumps fiendishly upon it. His bare feet tread a wild Terpsichorean orgie, and when he can dance no longer he falls upon the unoffending rag and tugs and strains and twists and

pulls, as though determined that it shall come to be washed no more. Flying buttons are his glee. If he can reduce the garment to the component parts in which the maker cut it, his joy is complete. When the power to beat and tramp and tug fails him, he tosses the shreds disdainfully into the stream or cistern and attacks the wardrobe of another helpless client. Yet he is strictly honest. At nightfall he bears back to its owner the dirt he carried away, and the threads that hold it together. When all other words of vituperation seem weak and insipid, the Anglo-Indian calls his enemy a dhoby.

The cook of the rendezvous offered, for three annas, to wash all that I owned, save my shoes and the inner workings of my pith helmet. In a more commonplace land the possessor of a single suit would have been bedridden until the task was done. But not in India. A large handkerchief was ample attire within the "bums' retreat." The beachcombers gathered in the dining-room saw in the costume cause for envy, not ridicule; for few could boast of as much when wash-day came for them, and the hours that might have been spent under sheets and blankets in a sterner clime passed quickly in the writing of letters.

From the back yard, for a time, came the shrieks of maltreated garments. Then all fell silent. In fear and trembling, I ventured forth to take inventory of my indispensable raiment. But as a dhoby the cook was a bungler. There were a few rents in the gear arrayed on the eaves gutter, a button was missing here and there, and there was no evidence of snowy whiteness. But every garment could still be easily identified, and an hour with a ship's needle, when the blazing sun had done its work, sufficed to heal the wounds, though not the scars, of combat.

Not a word of Haywood had reached me since the police station had swallowed him up. Evidently he was still forcibly separated from society; but had he escaped with a light sentence or fallen victim to "five years of the lock-step?" When my Monday report had been filed, I set out to find the answer to that question. Such cases, they told me, were tried at a court in a distant section of the city. Its officials knew nothing of the New Yorker however, and I tramped to the suburban station where the "crime" had been committed. Inquiry seemed futile. The vendor was there, as blithesome as ever, and his bananas were hoary with age, but the fourteen words of Hindustanee I had picked up were those he did not know. The policeman on the

platform had heard some discussion of the case, but had no definite information to offer. Then came the relief squad, and the officer who had made the arrest directed me to another distant court.

There were several buildings of judicial aspect scattered over the great campus, but they were closed for the night. The door of a hut, such as servants dwell in, stood ajar, and I entered. A high-caste native was gathering together books and papers from the desk of a miniature court room. I made known my errand.

"Haywood?" answered the Hindu, "Ah! Yes, I know about him. I know *all* about him, for he was tried before me."

The New Yorker had swallowed his pride, indeed, to consent to being tried by a "nigger" rather than to come into contact with white officers.

"And what did you hand him?" I ventured.

The justice, striving to appear at ease in a pompous dignity that was as much too large for him as the enormous blue and white turban that bellied out above his thin face like an unreefed mainsail in a stiff breeze, chose a ledger from the desk and turned over the leaves.

"Ah, here it is," he exclaimed, pointing out an entry; "Richard Haywood, Englishman. Charge, assault. Found in his possession, four annas, three pice, one pocketknife, one pipe, three cigarettes, two buttons." They were nothing if not exact, but they had overlooked one of the uses of the bands on pith helmets. "Plea, guilty. Sentence, five rupees fine. Prisoner alleging indigence, sentence was changed to one week in the Presidency jail."

"Suppose I pay his fine?" I asked. "Will he be released at once?"

"Yes, but the case has passed out of my jurisdiction. You must pay it to the warden."

No sojourner in Madras need make inquiry for the great white building that houses her felons. I reached it in time to find the massive gate still unlocked and gained admittance to the warden's office. He denied my request for an interview with Haywood, however, on the ground that prisoners for so brief a period were not allowed visitors. I opened my mouth to mention the fine, then stopped. Perhaps the New Yorker had some secret reason for choosing to swelter seven days in an Indian prison. If he was anxious to be free, he had only to take down his hat and, like the magician, produce from it the money that would set him at liberty. I resolved to run no risk of upsetting subtle plans, and turned back into the city.

Two days later, the broker confided to me the sad news that I

had been "spotted." Marten, who had joined me in the grove lodging, the night before, proposed to apply at once to the secretary of the Friend-in-Need Society for a ticket northward. Eager to investigate the Home which the society operates in Madras, I accompanied him. The secretary was an English magistrate who held court in a building facing the harbor. The court room was crowded to suffocation. While we waited for the native policeman to return with an answer to our note I caught enough of the interpreter's words to learn that the perspiring Briton under the punkahs was weighing the momentous question of the damages due a shopkeeper for temporary loss of caste.

The attaché, after long absence, brought the information that the trial was at its climax and that he dared not disturb proceedings. But Marten, familiar with the "ropes" of official India, snorted in disgust and led the way down a passage that brought us to an anteroom behind the judgment seat. Beckoning to me to follow, he pushed aside the officers who would have barred our progress, and marched boldly into the court room, halting before the stenographer's table. I anticipated immediate imprisonment for contempt of court; but the magistrate, eager, as who would not have been, for a moment's relief from native hair-splitting, signed to the interpreter to stay the case, and, sliding down in his daïs until he was all but lying on his back, bade us step up beside him. Marten, who had transferred to Calcutta the phantom ship he was pursuing, applied for a through ticket; I, for admission to the Society Home.

"I 'll give you both a chit to the manager for to-night," said the justice, when we had spun our yarns. "The Home is rather overcrowded, but we always try to find a place for Englishmen, even if we can't accommodate all the Germans, Italians, and Turks that turn up."

"But we 're not Englishmen," I put in.

"Nonsense," yawned the judge. "When I say Englishmen of course I include Americans, but as to you"—he turned to Marten—"I can't give you a ticket to Calcutta. That 's more than a thousand miles. I 'll have the manager ship you to Vizagapatam in the morning. That is half way, and the commissioner there will send you on."

He made out the notes and we departed. As we passed the street entrance, the corpulent babu was again pouring forth the woes of the polluted plaintiff.

But for a sign over the entrance, the Home might have been taken for the estate of an English gentleman of modest income. The grounds were extensive and well-wooded. The gate was guarded by a

lodge, beyond which the Home itself, a low, rambling bungalow, peeped through the trees. A score of vagabonds, burned brown in face and garb, loitered in the shade along the curb. Half were Eurasians. There is no more irreclaimable vagrant under the sun's rays than the tropical half-breed when once he joins the fraternity of the Great Unwashed. Reputation or personal appearance are to him matters of utter indifference. A threadbare jacket and trousers — sad commentaries of the willfulness of the dhoby — mark his social superiority to the coolie; but he goes barefooted by choice, often bareheaded, and in his abhorrence of unnecessary activity is as truly a Hindu as his maternal ancestor. Like the native, too, he is indifferent to bodily affliction — so it bring no pain — and laughs at encroaching disease as though he shared with the Brahmin the conviction that his present form is only one of hundreds that he will inhabit.

At our arrival a youth of this class was entertaining the assembled wanderers with a spicy tale. His language was the lazy, half-enunciated English of the tropical hybrid, and he chuckled with glee as often as his companions. Yet he was a victim of the dread "elephantiasis" so common among natives. His left foot and leg below the knee were swollen to four times their natural size, and to accommodate the abnormal limb his trouser leg was split to the thigh. As the gate opened, he rose and dragged his incurable affliction with him, leaving in the sand footprints like the nest of a mongrel cur.

The manager was a bullet-headed Irishman, chosen, like many another, for his knowledge of the wily ways of the vagrant, gleaned in many a year "on the road." The Home, though more ambitious in its scope, resembled the Asile Rudolph of Cairo. The meals, consisting of native food, were served in the same generous portions, and the cots, in spite of the unconventional habits of the inmates, were as scrupulously clean. Adjoining the quarters of the transient guests, the society provided a permanent home for aged and crippled beachcombers. We sat late under the veranda, listening to strange tales of the road of earlier days from a score of old cronies who quarreled for a pinch of tobacco and wept when their words were discredited. Sad fate, indeed, for those who, in the years of their strength and inspiration, had made the world their playground, to be sentenced thus to end their days in the meager bit of space to which sightless eyes or paralyzed limbs confined them, while they wandered on in spirit over boundless seas and trackless land.

Early the next morning the manager led the way to the Beach station

and, having supplied Marten with a ticket to Vizagapatam and a day's "batter," bade us bon voyage. The journey was long; it might also have been uneventful but for my companion's incorrigible longing to annoy his fellow-beings. The weak point in Marten's make-up was his head. Years before, during his days before the mast, he had gone ashore in a disreputable port after paying off from a voyage of several months' duration and, overladen with good cheer, had been so successfully sand-bagged that he not only lost his earnings but emerged from the encounter with a broken head. At the hospital it was found necessary to trepan his skull. But the metal plate had proved a poor substitute for sound bone; and the ex-pearl-fisher was wont to warn every new acquaintance to beware "horse-play," as a blow on the head might result in serious injury.

The favorite occupation of the Hindu on his travels is sleeping. If there is an alien voyager in his compartment he sits stiffly in his place, on guard against a loss of caste. When his companions are all of his own class, he stretches out on his back and slumbers, open-mouthed, like a dead fish. But the benches are short. The native, therefore, seeks relief by sticking his feet out the window. An Indian train bristles from engine to guard-van with bare, brown legs that give it the aspect of a battery of small guns.

Our express had halted, late in the afternoon, on a switch beside a train southward bound. Marten, chancing to have a straw in his possession, leaned out of the window and fell to tickling the soles of a pair of protruding feet. Their owner was a sound sleeper. For several moments he did not stir. As our train started, he awoke suddenly and sprang up with so startling a whoop that my companion recoiled in surprise and struck his head sharply on the top of the window.

The native was quickly avenged. For a moment his tormentor clung to the casement, straining in every limb, then fell to the floor, writhing in agony. Plainly he had lost consciousness, but he thrashed about the compartment like a captive boa constrictor, twisting body and limbs in racking contortions, and foaming at the mouth until his ashy face was covered with spume, and dirt from the floor. His strength was supernatural. To attempt to control him was useless,— forbidden, in fact, on the day that he had warned me of his injury. I took refuge on one of the benches to escape his convulsions.

The express sped on in the falling darkness. The next station was far distant. Before me rose a vision of myself surrounded by stern officials and attempting in vain to explain the presence of a corpse in

my compartment. Foolhardy, indeed, had I been to choose such a companion.

For a long hour his fit continued. Then the contortions of his body diminished little by little; his arms and legs twitched spasmodically in lessening jerks; his eyes, glassy and bloodshot, opened for a moment, closed again, and he lay still. Through the interminable night he stretched prone on the floor, motionless as a cadaver. When morning broke in the east he sat up suddenly with a jest on his lips and none the worse, apparently, for his ravings. But his memory retained no record of occurrences from the moment when the wild shout of the Hindu had sounded in his ears three hundred miles away.

An hour later we were purchasing sweetmeats in the bazaars of Vizagapatam. The flat, sun-baked fields of southern India had been left behind. The surrounding country was hilly and verdant; to the eastward stretched the blue bay of Bengal. In the offing a ship lay at anchor. Naked coolies, bent double under bales and bundles, waded waist-deep into the sea and cast their burdens into a lighter. Adjoining the bazaars, a sudra village of inhabited haycocks huddled together in a valley. Before the huts men, women, and children crouched on their haunches in the dust, their cadaverous knees on a level with their sunken eyes, their fleshless talons clawing at scraps of half-putrid food. Now and again they snarled at each other. More often they stared away as vacantly as ruminating animals at the vista of squalor beyond. Beside the village rose a barren rock, monument to the medley of religions that inflict India. On its summit, within a space of little more than an acre, commanding an outlook far out over the sea, stood a Brahmin temple, a Mohammedan mosque, and a Christian church, each reached by its own stairway cut in the perpendicular face of the rock.

Several miles separated the sudra village from the government buildings. On the way native policemen and soldiers drew up at attention and saluted as we passed. An entire squad, loitering before the central station, fell quickly into ranks and stood stiffly at present-arms as long as we remained in sight. In this English-governed land, the native sees in every sahib a possible superior officer to whom it is safest to be deferential.

We reached in due time the commissioner's office. His only representative in the deserted bureaus was an emaciated punkah-wallah, turned watchman, who bowed his head in the dust before the door as Marten addressed him.

"Nay, sahibs," he murmured, "the commissioner sahib and the little commissioners are absent, protectors of the miserable. To-day is the Brahmin new year"—it was April thirteenth—"oh, charitable one, and a holiday. The sahibs may come to-morrow. But nay! To-morrow is a feast of the Mohammedans and a holiday also."

"And the next day is Sunday," I put in, when Marten had interpreted.

"The commissioner's bungalow?" he demanded.

"In the forest beyond the hills," murmured the coolie, pointing northward. "Two cigarettes distant, oh, greatest of sahibs."

To the grief of many a peregrinating beachcomber, the "appearances" of the British governors of India are as rare as those of world-famed tenors. We continued along a shimmering highway, winding among trees, the dense shadows of which gave our eyes occasional relief, and a mile beyond found the commissioner at home. Marten gained a hearing and emerged with a note to the assistant commissioner. Once entangled in the meshes of Oriental red-tape, there was no escape; and from midday till late afternoon we raced back and forth through the streets and byways of Vizagapatam, and routed out no fewer than twelve Hindu officials from their holiday siestas. Even then my companion won a ticket only halfway to the city on the Hoogly.

We caught the night express and reached Berhampore next morning. At his bungalow, a youthful commissioner was so moved by Marten's account of the loss of his phantom ship—the story had lost nothing in frequent repetitions—that he waived all legal formalities and gave him an order on the station master for a ticket to his destination. Had he followed the movements of the abandoned seaman for the rest of the day he might have listened skeptically to the tale of the next wanderer to seek his assistance.

On the shores of the Bay of Bengal, some two hundred miles south of the capital and a day's tramp from the main line, lies Puri, the city of Juggernaut. I should have visited it alone had not Marten, utterly indifferent to the suspense of his grieving shipmates, insisted on accompanying me.

We alighted at Khurda Road and purchased tickets to the sacred city at a price that could scarcely have covered the cost of printing. A train of unusual length for a branch line was already so densely packed with pilgrims that those who tumbled out of the compartment which the station master chose to assign us were in imminent danger

of being left behind. Iron-voiced vendors danced about the platform. Their wares were the usual greasy sweets, doughy bread-sheets and curried potatoes that had been our fare for long days past. But this was "holy food," prepared by the priests of the hallowed city; for the Hindu on his pilgrimages to a sacred shrine may not eat of worldly viands. For all that the hawkers sold to us gladly, not abating, however, by a copper, the exorbitant prices to which their monopoly and the superstitions of their regular customers entitled them.

Night was falling when we descended at Puri. The station, as part of a system abhorred of the gods of Hind, stood in the open country, a full two miles from the sacred city. Not even the inhabitants of Benares are more fanatical than those of Puri. Natives coming upon us in the darkness along the road of sacrifice sprang aside in terror, and shrieked a long-drawn "sahib hai!" to warn others to beware our polluting touch. In the bazaars, many a merchant cried out in anger when we approached his tumble-down shop; and only with much wheedling could we draw one of them forth into the street to sell us sweetmeats and fruits. Half the shacks were devoted to the sale of *dude,* which is to say, milk — of bullocks and goats, of course, for the udders of the sacred cow may not be violated. We paused at one to purchase. A vicious-faced youth took our pice gingerly and filled two vessels much like flowerpots. I emptied my own and stepped forward to replace it on the worm-eaten board that served as counter. The youth sprang at me with a scream of rage and fear, and, before the pot had touched the counter, Marten knocked it out of my hand and shattered it to bits on the cobblestones, then smashed his own beside it. The two pice I had paid for the milk included the price of the vessel, great quantities of which are made of the red clay of neighboring pits. The crash of pottery that startled the silence of the night at frequent intervals were signs, not of some sad accident, as I had supposed, but that a drinker had finished his dude. The miserable, uneven streets were paved in fragments of broken pots.

There was not a native hut in Puri that we could enter, much less sleep in, and, our evening meal finished en marche, we returned to the station and asked permission of the Eurasian agent to occupy two of the wicker chairs in the waiting-room. He refused, not only because it was against the rules, which did n't matter, but because he was sure to be found out if he disobeyed them. He knew of better quarters, however, and directed us accordingly. We stumbled off through the railway yards and came upon the first-class coach he had mentioned,

The great road of Puri, over which the massive Juggernaut car is drawn once a year

on a deserted side track. It was the best "hotel" of our Indian trip. The car was built on the lines of the American Pullman, with great couches upholstered in soft leather. There were burnished lamps that we could light with impunity when the heavy curtains had been drawn, several large mirrors, and running water. Small wonder if we slept late next morning and found it necessary to reconnoiter a bit, for the sake of the station master's reputation, before making our exit.

The inventive genius of the Hindu has bedecked the dwelling of god Juggernaut with that extravagance of barbaric splendor beloved of the Oriental. Admittance is denied the sahib, but without is much to be seen. The temple rises in seven domes, one above each of four stone stairways deep-worn by centuries of pilgrim feet and knees, and three within the crumbling, time-eaten wall. They are domes, though, only in general outline. The Hindu strives for bizarre effects in his architecture; he dreads, above all, plain surfaces. The smaller domes rise en perron like the terraced vineyards of the Alps, the steps half hidden under glittering ornamentations,—hideous-faced gods of many arms, repulsive distortions of sacred animals, haggard, misshapen gargoyles. Above them towers Juggernaut's throne room, resembling a cucumber stood on end and suggesting that its builder, starting with the dome as his original conception, was loath to bring his creation to completion, and pushed his walls onward and upward to a dizzy height, to end at last abruptly in a flat cupola. Mayhap his despotic master had doomed him to that fate which has so often befallen successful architects in the Orient, of losing his hands when his masterpiece was completed.

Everywhere the temple bears witness to the ravages of time. The splendors of earlier days are faded and crumbling; there hovers over all not so much an air of neglect as of the inability of these groveling, British-ruled descendants of the talented creators to arrest the decay, an acknowledgment that the days of such constructions and the Hindus of such days are passé.

Pilgrims swarm in Puri at all seasons. Our way through the narrow streets was often barred by shrieking processions; a hundred pious families had pitched their tents at the edge of the great road. But it is in the month of July, when the bloodthirsty god makes his annual excursion to a smaller temple two miles distant, that untold multitudes pour in upon the wretched hamlet. The car, weighing many tons, is set up outside the temple, and Juggernaut, amid the clamor of barbaric rites, is placed on his throne therein. Hordes of natives eager to

"acquire merit" surge round the chariot, screaming and struggling in the frenzy of fanaticism for a place at the long ropes, and, to the accompaniment of weird incantations, the procession starts. The great road, scene in bygone centuries of uncounted human sacrifices, stretches away straight and level to the smaller temple. It is the most generous roadway in India, fully a furlong wide, in reality a great plain, covered with withered grass where the tramp of many feet has not worn it bare. A thousand naked bodies, burnished by the blazing sunlight, strain like demons at the ropes. As one falls, a hundred others surge forward to fight for his place. The aged peasant to whom this pilgrimage has dissipated the meager earnings of a lifetime, returns to his native village with inner assurance of the favor of the gods in his next existence if he can force his way through the rabble for one weak tug.

But the ponderous car moves slowly. A scanty rice diet is not conducive to great physical strength, and the massive wheels cut deep into the sandy plain. The ruts of the last journey, made nine months before, were by no means obliterated at the time of our visit. Short as is the distance between the two temples, the passing oftentimes endures a week; and the struggle for places decreases day by day as those who have performed their act of devotion turn homeward. The last fanatics drop out one by one. The ropes lose their tautness and sag of their own weight. A scanty remnant of the multitude gives a few "dry pulls"; and the grim-visaged god completes his journey behind bands of coolies hired for the occasion.

They sacrifice no more to Juggernaut. John Bull has scowled on the custom. But the American superintendent of the mission hospital among the trees at the roadside bore witness that the insatiate monster has still a goodly quota of victims; for annually the plague breaks out among the superstitious, devitalized pilgrims and leaves hundreds to die on the flat, sandy coast like fish tossed ashore.

He who has journeyed through this strange land will be slow ever after to look upon animals as devoid of intelligence and the power to reason. Encircling the temple, we chanced upon one of her sacred bulls setting forth on his morning rounds through the thatch-roofed bazaars that make up the town of Puri. He was a sleek, plump beast, with short, stumpy horns and a hump, as harmless, apparently, as a child's pet poodle. We kept him company, for, strange to say, the fanatics, who had all but mobbed us for setting foot on the flagging before a temple gate, offered no protest when we petted this most

The main entrance to Juggernaut's temple in Puri. I was mobbed for stepping on the flagging around the column

CORNELL

reverenced of animals. He was too near the gods no doubt to be polluted even by a sahib touch.

Setting a course for the nearest shop, he advanced with dignified tread, shouldering his way through the multitude, pushing aside all who stood in his path, not rudely, but firmly, something almost human in his manner, of waywardness, self-complacency, and arrogance. The impoverished descendants of an ancient house would have marched with that stately air of superiority, the son of a nouveau riche with that attitude of primary proprietorship in the world and its goods. Native reverence for the animal was little short of disgusting. Pilgrims prostrated themselves before him; hawkers stepped aside with muttered prayers; scores of women fell on their knees and elbows in the teeming streets, bowed their heads low in the dust, and ran to kiss his flanks.

Marching boldly up to the first booth, the bull chose a morsel of green stuff from the inclined platform, and, chewing it leisurely after the manner of an epicure, strolled on to the next stall. In the days of his novitiate, 'tis said, the sacred calf eats his fill of the first food he comes upon. A few weeks of experience, however, make him discriminating in his tastes. Through the long rows of shops the beast levied on all, stopping longest where the supplies were freshest, and awaking a mild protest from the keeper. It was only a protest, however; taking the form of a chanted prayer. For how may the Hindu know that the soul of his grandfather does not look out through those bovine eyes! At any rate, he acquires merit for every leaf and stock that he loses. Now and again, Marten interpreted a rogation.

"Hast thou not always had thy fill, oh, holy one!" prayed the native, rocking his body back and forth in time to his chant, "I would willingly feed thee. Hast thou not always found welcome at my shop? But I am a poor man, O king of sacred beasts. I pray thee, therefore, take of the goods of my neighbor, who is the possessor of great wealth. For my poverty is extreme, and if thou dost not desist, to-morrow may I not be here to feed thee."

As if in answer to the prayer, the animal moved on to the booth of the neighbor, who bore no outward sign, at least, of the great wealth that had been charged against him. His stock was fresh, however, and the bull ate generously in spite of the keeper's incantation. A second and a third time the prayer was repeated, but to no effect. Then the Hindu, picking up the joint of a bamboo, murmured the prayer into it.

"Thou canst not hear the prayer of a poor man, O sacred one, through thy ears," wailed the merchant. "Listen then to this petition," and, rising in his place, he struck the animal sharply over the nose with the bamboo. The bull turned a reproachful gaze on the violator of his sanctity, looked sorrowfully at him for a moment through half-closed eyelids, and strolled slowly away.

Conspicuous among the swarming thousands of Puri are the widows. With the death of her husband the Hindu woman must shave her head and dress in a snow-white sheet that clings closely about her as she walks. Under no circumstances may she marry again nor lay aside the garb that announces her bereavement. More often than not her departed spouse has left her unprovided with this world's goods, and in India the woman's means of earning a livelihood are — well, painfully limited. Under a humane British rule the widow's fate is less cruel than in the days when she mounted the funeral pyre with her dead, perhaps; but it is certainly no less humiliating. The uninformed sahib would seem justified in supposing that the chief interest of the Indian wife is the preservation of her husband's health.

The Hindu woman of the masses enjoys an almost Occidental freedom from seclusion. Compared with the coarse females of Mohammedan lands, she is modest, almost dainty — pretty, too, in her younger days, for all her color. But age comes early, and with the increase of wrinkles and barbaric jewelry her charms fade. Her costume is more ample than that of the Singhalese,— a single strip of cloth of ten or twelve yards wound round her body from neck to ankles, leaving only arms and left shoulder bare. Lithe and supple by nature, her every movement might be graceful were it not the custom of her husband, dreading the tax collector, to load her down with his surplus wealth. As a girl she is bedecked with gaudy trinkets before her costume has advanced beyond the fig-leaf stage; as a matron, her passing sounds like a junk-shop in the grasp of a cyclone. It is no unusual experience to meet a female wearing rings on every finger and toe; bracelets on both arms from wrists to elbows; rings in the top, side, and lobe of each ear; and three nose-rings, one of which, some two inches in diameter, pierces the left nostril and swings back and forth against the cheek of the wearer. What a throb of joy must come to the husband who presses so precious a wife to his bosom! But on the other hand, as once I caught Marten musing to himself, "Suppose she flew de coop?"

The term "old maid" has no synonym in Hindustanee, and needed

"Suttee" having been forbidden by their English rulers, Hindu widows must now shave their heads, dress in white, and gain their livelihood as best they can

A seller of the wood with which the bodies of Hindus are burned on the banks of the Ganges. Very despised caste.

none until the first female missionary invaded the peninsula. Bachelors, too, are rare. There chanced to fall into my hands an Anglo-Indian sheet wherein was propounded this enigma over the signature of "a puzzled babu."

"Why," demanded the puzzled one, after the usual incomprehensible introduction necessary to prove his knowledge of the sahib tongue, "is the Englishman living many times without a wife? If the Hindu is more than very young and has not yet married himself he is contemplated wicked and unclean. I am reading that in all the white man countries there live more women than the men are. Why has not every sahib taken one for his wife?"

Why not, indeed?

Marten had begun to display an arrogant author's pride in the tale that had carried him so rapidly northward. Several times he had gone out of his way in Puri to tell some Eurasian or babu the sad story of his marooning, and, as afternoon crept on, he resolved to repeat it once more for the entertainment of the commissioner of the district.

"But," I protested, "you have a ticket to Calcutta. You can't use two!"

"Right," he answered, "but it 's about six cigarettes from the commish's bungalow to the station, and he may come up with the dibs without sending a nigger so far to buy the pasteboard. If he don't loosen we 'll have to fix it up with the station master."

The commissioner had fled to the hills and his deputy was a native; a strange one, though, for he not only acceded to the request of the stranded seaman for a through ticket, but actually and visibly hurried to complete the necessary formalities before the departure of the daily train. He did not "come up with the dibs," however, nor would the station master buy back the ticket which a government clerk purchased for my companion. But there was some gain in the manœuver; for upon his arrival in Calcutta the railway officials very kindly refunded to Marten some four rupees on the unused portion of the ticket from Berhampore.

An express similar to that from which we had alighted twenty-four hours before rumbled into Khurda Road soon after we reached the main line. We strolled along the platform and pulled open the door of the European compartment — and fell back in astonishment. A familiar topee with bulging hatband swung from a peg near the ceiling. On a bench beneath, reposed the bundle which I had once lugged

across the Maidan of Madras, and beside it sat Haywood! For some cause unknown he had been released at the end of six days' imprisonment and had lost no time in taking the north-bound express — without a ticket.

His joy at the reunion exceeded our own. Marten grumbled under his breath at the fate that kept us in such baneful company, and, though he did not hesitate to invent fanciful tales to explain to querulous collectors the presence of three tropical helmets when only two travelers were visible, he said nothing of the extra ticket in his hatband. Several times during the night Haywood found it expedient to drop out the further door for a stroll in the darkness, but he escaped detection and, as the day dawned, alighted with us at the Howrah terminal. He had "held down" the same train without paying an anna of fare, for 1,032 miles!

The pontoon bridge connecting Howrah with Calcutta was alive with coolies tramping from their wretched hovels on the western bank to a day of toil in the city. A multitude of natives disported in the muddy waters of the Hoogly before a sacred bathing ghat. Below the bridge scores of ships lay at anchor, native sampans and barges inveigled their way among them, from the docks came the rattle of steam cranes and the shrill chatter of stevedores at their labor. Here, at last, was a real city, with all its familiar roar and bustle. My companions departed to visit a missionary notorious for his friendliness to beachcombers, and I plunged at random into the stream of humanity that surged through the dusty streets.

CHAPTER XVI

THE HEART OF INDIA

LATE that afternoon we were reunited at the Sailors' Home. As time wore on the conviction grew that we must shake off Haywood once for all. Go where we would, he was ever at our heels, bringing disgrace upon us. Picking pockets was his glee. When other excitement failed he turned to filching small articles from the booths along the way. The last straw was added to our burden as we were returning to the Home along the Strand on our second day in Calcutta. The sophisticated inhabitants of the metropolis, far from springing aside at the approach of a European, are more accustomed to push him into the gutter. To be jostled by a "nigger" was an insult that Haywood could not brook. He resorted to Bowery tactics; but to little effect, for the Strand was crowded. The day was hot. The higher caste natives, our chief annoyers, carried umbrellas that soon suggested to the New Yorker a better means of retaliation. Opening his pocket knife, he marched boldly through the throng, slashing viciously at every sunshade whose owner provoked his ire. An angry murmur rose behind us. Before we had reached the Home, a screaming mob of tradesmen surged around us, waving ruined umbrellas in our faces. Decidedly it was time to abandon the perpetrator of such outrages. Hints had availed nothing, frankness less. Violence against a "pal" was out of keeping with the code of morals of "the road." There was nothing left but strategy.

The New Yorker ate heartily that evening. His plate was still heaped high with currie and rice when Marten and I retired to a bench in the garden of the Home. Plan had I none, as yet, for continuing my journey, for Calcutta was worth a week of sight-seeing. But plans are quickly made in the vagabond world.

"Look here, mate," said Marten, in a stage whisper, "we 've got to ditch that fellow. The cops 'll be running us in along with him some day."

I nodded. A seaman came to stretch himself out in the grass near at hand, and we fell silent. Darkness was striding upon us when a

servant of the Home advanced to close the gate leading into the street. Suddenly Marten raised a hand and shouted to the gateman.

"Let 's dig out," he muttered.

"Where?" I queried.

"Up country."

"Sure," I answered, springing to my feet.

We slipped out through the gate, stalked across the Maidan among the statues of sahibs who have made history in India, past old Fort William, and down to the banks of the Hoogly. The tropical night had fallen, and above the city behind blazed the brilliant southern cross. For an hour we tramped along the docks, jostled now and then by black stevedores and native seamen. The cobble stones under our feet gave way to a soft country road. A railway crossed our path and we stumbled along it in the darkness. Out of the night rose a large, two-story bungalow.

"Guards' shack," said Marten.

A "goods train" was making up in the yards. A European in the uniform of a brakeman ran down the steps of the bungalow, a lantern in his hand. Behind him came a coolie, carrying his lunch-basket.

"Goin' out soon, mate?" bawled Marten.

"All made up," answered the Englishman, peering at us a moment with the lantern high above his head, and hurrying on.

"Think we 'll go along," shouted Marten.

The guard was already swallowed up in the darkness, but his voice came back to us out of the night:—

"All right! Lay low!"

A moment later the tiny British engine shrieked, a man in the neighboring tower opened the block, and the diminutive freight screamed by us. We grasped the rods of a high, open car and swung ourselves up. On the floor, folded to the size of a large mattress, lay a tarpaulin car-cover. A cooling breeze, sweeping over the moving train, lulled us to sleep. Once we were awakened by the roar of a passing express, and peered over the edge of the car to find ourselves on a switch. Then the train rattled on and we stretched out again. A second time we were aroused by shunting engines, and the guard, passing by, called out that he had reached the end of his run. We climbed out, and, retreating to a grassy slope, slept out the night.

The morning sun showed an extensive forest close at hand. A red, sandy roadway, deep-shaded by thick overhanging branches, led off through the trees. Here and there in a tiny clearing a scrawny native

cooked a scanty breakfast over a fire of leaves and twigs before his thatch hut. Above us sounded the note of a tropical bird. The jostling multitudes and sullen roar of Calcutta seemed innumerable leagues distant.

The forest opened and fell away on either hand; and we paused on the high, grassy bank of a broad river, glistening in the slanting sunlight. Below, in two groups, natives, male and female, were bathing. Along a highway following the course of the river stretched a one-row town, low hovels of a single story for the most part, above which a government building and a modest little church stood out conspicuously.

A quaint, old-fashioned spire against the background of an India horizon is a landmark not easily forgotten.

"Thunder!" snorted Martin. "Is this all we've made? That bloody train must have been side-tracked half the time we was poundin' our list'ners. I know this burg. It's Hoogly, not forty miles from Cally. But there's a commish here. He's a real sport, and ticketed me to Cally four years ago. Don't believe he'll remember my figure-'ead, neither. Come on."

We strolled on down the highway. Before the government building a score of prisoners, with belts and heavy anklets of iron connected by two jointed bars, were piling cobble stones.

"But here!" I cried suddenly; "He'll only give you a ticket back to Calcutta if we're so near there."

"No bloody fear," retorted Marten; "he'll ticket me the way I want to go. That's old Lord Curzy's law."

"Then you'll have to drop that yarn about the *Guiseppe Sarto*."

Marten had thus christened his phantom ship, not because he hoped to win favor with the Pope, but because he had been hard-pressed for an Italian name. Commissioners who listened to his "song and dance" had a disconcerting habit of drawing from a pigeon-hole the latest marine guide at the mention of an English vessel. But Italian wind-jammers, unlisted, might be moved about as freely as pawns on a chessboard.

"Drop nothing," snapped the ex-pearl fisher. "Think I'm goin' to let a good yarn like that go to waste, an' after me spendin' a whole bloody day learnin' to pronounce that dago name — an' the skipper's? Not me! I'm goin' to send the Joe Taylor "— in familiar parlance he preferred the English version of the name — "over to Bombay, this time. I'll have 'er due there in four days."

We turned in at an imposing lodge gate and followed a graveled walk towards a great, white bungalow with windows commanding a vista of the sparkling Hoogly and the rolling plains beyond. From the veranda, curtained by trailing vines, richly-garbed servants watched our approach with the half-belligerent, half-curious air of faithful house dogs. Having no personal interest in the proceedings, I dropped into a rustic bench beside the highway. A chatter of Hindustanee greeted my companion; a stocky Punjabi rose from his heels and entered the bungalow.

There ensued a scene without precedent in my Indian experience. A tall, comely Englishman, dressed in the whitest of ducks, stepped briskly out upon the veranda, and, totally ignoring the awful gulf that separates a district commissioner from a penniless beachcomber, bawled out: —

"I say, you chaps, come inside and have some breakfast."

Much less would have been my astonishment had he suddenly opened fire on us from a masked battery. I looked up to see Marten leaning weakly against a veranda post.

"I only come with my mate, sir," I explained. "It 's him as wants the ticket. I 'm only waitin', sir."

"Then come along and have some breakfast while you wait," retorted the Englishman. "Early risers have good appetites, and where would you buy anything fit to eat in Hoogly? I 've finished, but Maghmoód has covers laid for you."

We entered the bungalow on tiptoe and took places at a flower-decked table. Two turbaned servants slipped noiselessly into the room and served us viands of other lands. A punkah-wallah on the veranda kept the great fans in motion. Upon me fell the vague sense of having witnessed scenes like this in some former existence. Even here, then, on the banks of the Hoogly, men ate with knives and forks from delicate chinaware, wiping their fingers on snow-white linen rather than on a leg of their trousers, and left fruit peelings on their plates instead of throwing them under the table! It seemed anachronistic.

"I told you," murmured Marten, finishing his steak and a long silence, and mopping his plate dry with a slice of bread plastered with butter from far-off Denmark; "I told you he was a real sport. He 's the same one, an' give me a swell hand-out four years ago."

Maghmoód entered bearing cigars and cigarettes on a silver tray,

and the information that we were to follow the commissioner to his office, two miles distant.

An hour later we were journeying leisurely northwestward in a crowded train that halted at every hamlet and crossroad. Marten had received a ticket to Bankipore, far beyond the destination of the local at Burdwan, where we alighted three hours before the arrival of the night express. A gaping crowd surrounded us as we halted to purchase sweetmeats in the bazaars and, flocking at our heels, quickly drew upon us the attention of the local police.

Dreading Russian spies, the Indian government has, during the few years past, required its officers to follow closely the trail of foreigners within the country. The native policeman, however, could not distinguish a suspicious character from a member of the viceroy's council, and takes a childish delight in demonstrating his importance to society by subjecting every sahib stranger who will suffer it to a lengthy cross-examination. Half the gendarmes of Burdwan, eager to win from their superiors reputation for perspicacity, sought to bring us before the recorders at the police station. Their methods were ludicrous. They neither commanded nor requested; they invited us in the flowery phrases of compliment to accompany them, and, when we passed on unheeding, turned back in sorrow to their posts.

Two lynx-eyed officers, however, hung on our heels, and, following us to the station as night fell, joined a group of railway gendarmes on the platform. A lengthy conference ensued; then the squad lined up before the bench on which we were seated, and a sergeant drew out one of the small volumes which the government has adopted as a register for transient Europeans.

"Will the sahibs be pleased to give me their names?" wheedled the sergeant, in the timid voice of a half-starved Villon addressing his verses to a noble patron.

I took the book and pencil from his hand and filled out the blanks on a page.

"And you, sahib?" said the officer, turning to Marten.

"Oh, go to the devil!" growled my companion; "I ain't no Roossian. You got no damn business botherin' Europeans. Go chase yourself."

"The sahib must give the informations or he cannot go on the train," murmured the native.

"How the devil will you stop me from goin'?" demanded Marten.

The officer muttered something in the vernacular to his companions.

"You would, would you?" bellowed Marten.

"Ah! The sahib speaks Hindustanee?" gasped the sergeant. "What is your name, please, sir?"

"Look here," growled Marten, "I 'll give you my name if you 'll promise not to ask any more fool questions."

The native smiled with delight and poised his pencil.

"And the name, sir?"

"Higgeldy Piggeldy," said Marten.

"Ah! And how is it spelled, please, sahib?"

The sergeant wrote the words slowly and solemnly at my companion's dictation."

"And which is the sahib's birthplace?" he wheedled.

"You bloody liar," roared Marten; "did n't you say you would n't ask anything else?"

"Ah! Yes, sahib," bleated the babu; "but we must have the informations. Please, sir, which is your birthplace?"

"If you don't chase yourself, I 'll break your neck!" roared Marten, springing to his feet.

The assembled officers fell over each other in their haste to escape the onslaught. Marten returned to the bench and sat down in moody silence. The sergeant, urged forward by his fellow officers, advanced timidly to within several paces of us and, poised ready to spring, addressed me in gentle tones: —

"Sahib, the police wish, please, sir, to know why the sahibs have come to Burdwan."

"Because the local dropped us here, and we had to wait for the express."

"But why have you not take the express all the time?"

"We were at Hoogly. It does n't stop there."

"Then, why have you not stay in the station? Why have you walked in the bazaars and in the temples?"

"To see the sights, of course."

"But there are not sights in Burdwan. It is a dirty village and very poor and very small. Europeans are coming to Benares and to Calcutta, but they are not coming in Burdwan. Why have the sahibs come in Burdwan, and the sun is very hot?"

"I told you why. The sun does n't bother us."

"Then why have the sahibs bought sweets and chappaties in the bazaars?"

"Because we were hungry."

"Sahibs are not eating native food; they must have European food. Why have you bought these?"

"For Lord's sake, hit that nigger on the head with something!" burst out Marten. "I want to sleep."

The sergeant retreated several paces and continued his examination.

"And why have the sahibs gone to the tem—?"

The shriek of an in-coming train drowned the rest, and we hastened towards the European compartment.

"You must not go in the train!" screamed the sergeant, while the squad danced excitedly around us. "Stop! You must answer—"

We stepped inside and slammed the door.

"The train cannot be allowed to go!" screeched the babu, racing up and down the platform. "The sahibs are not allowed to go. You must hold the train, sahib!" he cried to a European guard hurrying by.

"Hold nothing," answered the official. "Are you crazy? This is the Bombay mail," and he blew his whistle.

The sergeant grasped the edge of the open window with one hand and, waving his notebook wildly in the other, raced along the platform beside us.

"You must answer the questions, sahibs—"

The train was rapidly gaining headway.

"Get down, sahibs! Come out! You are not allowed—"

He could hold the pace no longer. With a final shriek he released his hold and we sped on into the night.

Hours afterward we were awakened by a voice at the open window. A native officer was peering in upon us.

"I have received a telegraph from Burdwan for a sahib who has not answered some questions," he smiled, holding up his notebook.

"My name's Franck," I yawned.

"Then it must be the other sahib," said the native. "You are, sir, I think, Mr. Higgeldy Piggeldy?"

"Naw! Mine's Marten," said my companion, drawing out his papers. "Bloody funny name, that. Can't be no Englishman. Must be a Roossian."

We left the express at daybreak. Bankipore was suffering from one of the long droughts that have ever been the blight of this section of India. The flat plains of the surrounding country spread out an

arid, sun-baked desert as far as the eye could see. Along the roadway the dust rose in clouds at every step, the trees stood lifeless in ragged shrouds of dead, brown leaves. The few low-caste natives still energetic enough to bestir themselves dragged by at the listless pace of animals turned out to die, utter hopelessness in their shriveled faces, their tongues lolling from their mouths. The sear grass of the great Maidan was crushed to powder under our feet; a half-mile stroll brought on all the symptoms of physical fatigue; the moistureless, dust-laden air smarted in our throats and lungs and left our lips and nostrils parched and cracking.

In the center of the Maidan, as far as possible from the human kennels of the surrounding town, were pitched several sun-bleached tents. A dun-colored coolie, squatting in a dusty patch, cried out at our approach; and a native of higher caste pushed aside the flap of the tent and, shading his eyes under an outstretched hand, gazed towards us. He was dressed in uniform, his jacket open at the throat, and his bare feet thrust into a pair of shabby slippers. A figure commonplace enough, yet at sight of him we gasped with delight. For on his head sat a fez! It was far from becoming to its wearer; a turban would have offered more protection against the Indian sun, but it heralded a Mohammedan free from the fanatical superstitions of the Brahmin faith. We might quench our thirst at once with no pollution of the cup; and depart without feeling that creepy sensation of guilt that one experiences at home in stopping in a saloon for a drink of water — if such things happen. How the point of view towards one's fellow men change with every advance to the eastward! In this superstitious land an Islamite seemed almost a brother.

But we were thirsty.

"Pawnee hai? Oh! Maghmoód, we would drink," cried Marten.

The follower of the prophet smiled at the words of the vernacular as he answered in perfect English: —

"Assuredly, gentlemen. I should be delighted. Step inside, where it is cooler."

His was no crude-builded language of the babu. An Oxford fellow could not have expressed his thoughts more clearly, nor given more immediate evidence of a sahib point of view.

The tent was furnished with mats and couches. In one corner stood a chair and a desk littered with papers. The Mohammedan

handed us a chettie of water. When we had drunk our fill, he offered cigarettes and motioned to a couch.

"Be seated, gentlemen," he said. "Unless you have urgent business you may as well rest a bit."

"Gee!" puffed my companion, leaning back on his elbows; "I 'm glad a Mohammedan's superstitions don't make him believe all this tommy-rot about pollution."

Marten of Tacoma was not distinguished for tact.

"We try, at any rate," smiled the officer, "to be sane in our beliefs."

"Of course," went on my mate, "you have plenty of fool superstitions, too; and you put rings in your wives' noses, to lead 'em around by, I suppose?."

A flash of fire kindled the eye of our host, but he smiled again as he replied:

"We try, though, sir, to be sparing of unnecessary insults."

"Gee!" murmured Marten, without looking up; "This is a good cigarette."

"Is this an encampment?" I put in, feeling it my duty to lead the conversation into other channels. "I don't see any sepoys about."

"Oh, by no means," said the Mohammedan; "this is police headquarters. The smaller tents house the men."

"Then you are not a soldier?"

"Not in recent years. I am chief of police for Bankipore."

Marten cast a half-startled glance at the profile of the man he had taken for a simple sergeant, and assumed a more dignified posture.

"The police, then, live in tents here?" I went on.

"If we did n't, few of us would be living at all," replied the chief. "Early in March, with the famine, the plague broke out, and the inhabitants have been dying in hundreds ever since. Ten of the force were carried from their huts to the funeral pyres in the first week. Then we set up the tents."

"Does n't the government try to check the epidemic?"

"Try! We have been fighting it tooth and nail since the day it began. But what can we do among ignorant, superstitious Hindus? Our people are poor. They live in filthy huts with dirt floors, into which rats can dig easily. If we attempt to fumigate a house, the family abandons it and sleeps on the ground outside, the surest way of taking the plague. If we try to purify their water and food we

have a riot on our hands. The huts, too, are so packed together and burdened with filth that the only way to clean them would be to burn up the town. We have a force of government doctors. Medicine, also, is free to all. But you know my people. They would far rather die of plague than run the risk of losing caste through the doctor's touch. If a man dies, his family prefers to scoop a hole in the floor and squat on his grave, rather than to turn his body over to Christians or Mohammedans. We have strict laws against concealing sickness and death, but it is difficult to enforce them. To make things worse, the rumor is always going the rounds that the sahib government has ordered the doctors to poison their patients or cast a spell upon them; and among the masses such tales are readily believed. What can you expect of ignorant, fanatical people who barely realize that reading and writing exist, and who never learn anything except on hearsay? Police and doctors and government medicine will never wipe out the plague. The only thing that can stop it is rain, and until that comes Bankipore will keep on dying."

Marvelous was the manner in which this son of the Orient ran on in an alien tongue, never at a loss for the word to express his meaning precisely.

"Do all those attacked by the plague die?" I asked.

"I have been keeping tab on the cases," returned the chief, "and I find that a fraction of less than ninety-six per cent result fatally. I know of men who have recovered. Our former district commissioner was one. If the victim is a European or a well-to-do native he has about one chance for life to three for death. But among the sudras, the coolies, the peasants, the poor shopkeepers, there is small hope. They have always half starved on a rice diet, the drought has left us famine-stricken for a year; obviously, having no constitutions to fall back upon, they merely lie down and die, never making an effort unless their religious superstitions are in danger of violation. No, it is only rain that will save us," he concluded, pushing aside the flap of the tent and gazing hopelessly at the cloudless sky.

We turned away into the town. It needed no word from the chief of police to call attention to the ravages of plague and famine. The shopkeepers, humped over their wares, wore the air of dogs ever in the fear of a beating; the low-caste natives stared greedily at the stale, dust-covered foodstuffs spread out along the way; fleshless personifications of misery crawled by, whining for cowries — the seashells that charitable India bestows on her beggar army. The inhab-

itants were not hungry. That is their normal condition. They were starving. Yet the general misery made them none the less slaves of their omnipresent superstitions. The gaunt, sunken-eyed merchant screamed in frenzy when our fingers approached his octogenarian rice cakes and chappaties; he held his bony claw on a level with our knees to catch the coppers we offered. His stock was plentiful, if grey-bearded; his prices as low as in the days of abundance. It was, after all, chiefly a famine of annas.

At the great government bungalow, on a low hill to the eastward of the town, were few evidences of affliction. The official force, from the richly-gowned and turbaned judge, holding court on the veranda, to the punkah-wallah who cooled his court-room, were glossy, well-fed creatures. The commissioner, who drove up in a dog cart ornamented with two footmen in scarlet and white livery, and who marched with majestic tread through a lane of kowtowing inferiors, certainly had not come without his breakfast. But even he must have known of the famine, for in the stringy shade of thin-foliaged trees nearby huddled scores of wretches waiting for leave to appeal for government assistance.

Native starvelings, obviously, should not take precedence over a sahib. While I dropped into a proffered seat at the right hand of the judge, Marten followed the Englishman inside. A long line of prisoners, shackled in pairs and guarded by many native policemen, awaited judgment. Two by two they dropped on their knees in the sun-scorched dust, sat down on their heels, and, raising clasped hands to their faces, rocked slowly back and forth. The judge muttered a half-dozen words, which writers behind him jotted down in ponderous volumes, waved a flabby hand, and the culprits passed on.

"These," whispered an interpreter in my ear, "are wicked thieves. They have stolen chappaties in the bazaars. They have prison for three months. These next escape quickly with six weeks. They have cut a coolie with knives. Those who kneel now have polluted high-caste food."

Close to an hour the procession continued. An aged coolie, wrinkled and creased of skin as if he had been wrung out and hung up to dry, and a naked, half-grown boy brought up the rear. While they knelt, the secretary turned over the pages of his book.

"More thieves," said the interpreter. "The boy has stolen a brass lota; the man, the lunch of a train guard, three months ago. Their prison is ended."

The judge spoke and a policeman produced a large bunch of keys and removed their shackles. Man and boy fell on their faces in the dust, and rising, wandered away over the brow of the hill.

A moment later Marten emerged from the bungalow.

"The old song and dance is as good as ever!" he cried, when we were out of earshot. "I got a boost to Allahabad an' two days' batter an' the commish's sympathy. Come on; let 's take in the sights."

Bankipore's chief object of interest was a stone granary, in shape an immense bee-hive or hay-cock, depository in days of plenty for years of famine. As such things go in India, it was a very modern structure, having been erected in the time of the American revolution. It was empty. An outside stairway, winding upward, led to a circular opening in the apex, through which trains of coolies, in days gone by, poured a steady stream of grain. Within was Stygian darkness. We were rewarded for the perspiring ascent by a far-reaching view of the famine-stricken plains, and off to the eastward I caught my first glimpse of the Ganges.

We halted late that night at Buxar, far short of Allahabad, and took slower train next morning to Moghul Serai. For to have remained on board the express would have been to pass in the darkness the holy city of Benares.

The pilgrim train was densely packed with wildly-excited natives and their precious bundles. Not once during the seven-mile journey across the arid plateau did a vista of protruding brown feet greet us as we looked back along the carriages. The windows of every compartment framed eager, longing faces, straining for the first glimpse of the sacred city. To many of our fellow-travelers this twentieth of April had been in anticipation, and would be in retrospect, the greatest day of their worldly existence. For the mere sight of holy "Kashi" suffices to wipe out many sins of past decades. Even the gods of the Brahmin come here to consummate their purification.

As we rounded a low sand dune, a muffled chorus of exclamations sounded above the rumble of the train, and called me to the open window. To the left, a half-mile distant, the sacred river Ganges swept round from the eastward in a graceful curve and continued southward across our path. On the opposite shore, bathing its feet in the sparkling stream, sprawled the holy city. Travelers familiar with all urban dwelling places of man name three as most distinctive in sky-line,— New York, Constantinople and Benares. The last, cer-

Bankipur's chief object of interest is a vast granary built in the time of the American Revolution to keep grain for times of famine. From its top the traveler catches his first glimpse of the Ganges

Women of Delhi near gate forced during the Sepoy rebellion. One carries water in a Standard Oil can, another a basket of dung-cakes

tainly, is not least impressive. Long before Gautama, seeking truth, journeyed thither, multitudes of Hindus had been absolved of their sins at the foot of this village on the Ganges. To the bathing ghats and shrines of the Brahmin the Buddhist added his temples. Then came the Mohammedan conquerors with new beauties of Saracenic architecture. In the toleration of British rule Jain and Sihk and even Christian have contributed their share to this composite monument to the world's religions. Through it all, the city has grown without rhyme or reason. Temples, monasteries, shrines, kiosks, topes, mosques, chapels have vied with each other and the huts and shops of the inhabitants in a wild scramble for place close to the absolving waters of the Ganges, until the crescent-shaped "Kashi" of to-day lies heaped upon itself, as different from the orderly cities of the western world as a mass of football players in hot scrimmage from a company of soldiers. From the very midst of the architectural scramble, giving center to the picture, rise two slender minarets of the Mosque Aurunzebe, needing but a connecting bar to suggest two goal posts.

The train rumbled across the railway bridge and halted on the edge of the city. No engineering genius could have surveyed a line through it. We plunged into the riot of buildings and were at once engulfed in a whirlpool of humanity. Damascus and Cairo had seemed over-populated; compared with Benares, they were deserted. Where the chattering stream flowed against us, we advanced by short spurts, pausing for breath when we were tossed aside into the wares of bawling shopkeepers, or against a façade decorated with bois de vache. Worshipers, massed before outdoor shrines, blocked the way as effectually as stone walls. Cross currents of pilgrims, bursting forth from Jain or Hindu temple, bore us away with them through side streets we had not chosen to explore. Pilgrims there were everywhere, of every caste, of every shade, from the brass-tinted hillman to the black Madrasi, representatives of all the land of India from the snow line of the Himalayas to Tuticorin by the sea. Among them the inhabitants of Benares were a mere handful.

Sacred bulls shouldered us aside with utter indifference to what had once been the color of our skins. Twice the vast bulk of a holy elephant loomed up before us. On the friezes and roofs of Hindu temples monkeys wearing glittering and apparently costly rings on every finger scampered and chattered with an audacity that to the natives was an additional proof of their divinity.

We had been buffeted back and forth through the tortuous channels for more than an hour when a frenzied beating of drums and a wailing of pipes bore down upon us.

"Religious procession!" screamed Marten, dragging me after him up the steps of a Jain temple. "We'll have to hang out here till it gets by. How's them fer glad rags?"

The paraders were, indeed, attired in astonishing costumes, even for India. The street below us was quickly filled with a screaming of colors no less discordant than the harrowing "music" to which a thousand marchers kept uncertain step. Some of the fanatics, not satisfied with an exaggeration of native garb, masqueraded in the most fantastic of guises, among which the most amusing was that of a bold fellow burlesquing a sahib. He was "made up" to emphasize the white man's idiosyncrasies, and marched in a hollow square where no point could be hidden from the view of the delighted bystanders. To the Hindu, he is an ass who wears jacket and trousers in preference to a cool, flowing robe; the tenderness of sahib feet is the subject of many a vulgar jest. The burlesquer was attired in a suit of shrieking checks that fitted his slender form as tightly as a glove; on his feet were shoes with great projecting soles in which he might have walked with impunity on red-hot irons. His flour-powdered face was far paler than that of the latest subaltern to arrive from England; over his long hair he wore a close-cropped wig of sickly yellow hue; and his tropical helmet would have given ample shade for four men. He was smoking a homemade imitation of a "bulldog" pipe, and swung a small fence rail jauntily back and forth as he walked. Every dozen yards he feigned to fall into a rage and, dancing about in a simulation of insanity, rushed upon the surrounding paraders, striking wildly about him with his clenched fists. The fact that he never opened his lips during this performance brought great delight to the natives, accustomed to give vent to their anger by taxing their vocal organs to the utmost.

There were other suggestions of the Hindu's hatred of his rulers, the boldest of which brought up the rear of the procession. Two natives bore aloft a rough wooden cross on which a monkey was crucified — with cords rather than with nails. How widespread are the teachings of Christian missionaries was suggested by the fact that the most illiterate countryman "saw the point," and twisted his lean features into the ugly grimace that is the low-caste Hindu's manner of expressing mirth.

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One of the many flights of steps leading down to the bathing-ghats and funeral pyres of Benares

We fought our way onward to the center of the town and descended a great stone stairway beneath the slender minarets. Up and down the embankment groups of thinly-clad pilgrims, dripping from their ablutions, smoked vile-smelling cigarettes in the shadow of temple walls or purchased holy food at the straw-thatched booths. Here and there members of the most despised caste in India stood before ponderous scales, weighing out the wood that must be used in the cremation of the Hindu dead who hope to attain salvation. The abhorrence of their fellow-beings hung lightly upon the wood-sellers, tempered as it was by the enjoyment of a monopoly compared with which an American trust is a benevolent institution.

In the bathing ghats, segregation of sexes prevailed. The men wore loin clothes, the women white winding sheets through which the contour and hue of their brown bodies shone plainly as they rose from the water. From time to time bands of natives, covered with the dust of travel, tumbled down the stairways and plunged eagerly into the purging river. There is no sin so vile, says the Hindu, that it cannot be washed away in the Ganges at the foot of Benares. Let us hope so, for its waters certainly have no other virtues. Gladly would I, for one, bear away any portable burden of peccadillos in preference to descending into that fever-infected flow of mud. A ray of sunlight will not pass through a wineglassful of Ganges water. Yet pilgrims not only splashed about in it, ducking their heads beneath the surface and dashing it over their faces, they rinsed their mouths in it, scraped their tongues with sticks dipped in it, spat it out in great jets, as if bent on dislodging some tenacious sin from between their back molars.

Our circuit of the city brought us back to the station long enough before train time to give opportunity for a duty that falls often to the roadster in India,— a general "wash up." Twice that day we had been taken for Eurasians. Benares ends abruptly at the railway line; beyond, stretches a flat, monotonous landscape of arid, unpeopled moorland. Armed with a two-pice lump of soap of the hue of maple sugar, we slid down the steep bank below the railway bridge in an avalanche of sand and rubble. Once there, Marten decided that he was "too tired" to turn dhoby, and stretched out in the shade of the bank. I approached the stream, sinking halfway to my knees in the slime. There would have been no Indian impropriety in disrobing at once, but there would certainly have been a sadly sunburned sahib ten minutes afterward. Ordinary beachcombers, like my compan-

ion, being possessed of but two cotton garments, must have retired unlaundered or blistered. I, however, was no ordinary vagabond. My wardrobe included three pieces. It was the simplest matter in the world, therefore, to scrub the jacket while wearing the shirt and the shirt while wearing the jacket, and to wrap the garment de luxe around my legs while I soaked the third in the accumulation of Hindu sins.

"Say, mate," drawled Marten, while I daubed my trousers with the maple-sugar soap, "you 'll sure go to heaven fer scrubbin' your rags in that mud. There 's always a bunch of Hindu gods hangin' around here. I don't want to disturb a honest laborin' man, o' course, but I 'd be so lonesome if you was gone that I 'm goin' to tell you that there 's one comin' to take you to heaven now, an' if you 're finished with livin'—"

I looked up suddenly. Barely ten feet away the ugly snout of a crocodile was moving towards me.

"Stand still!" shouted Marten, as I struggled to pull my legs from the clinging mud. "He 's a god, I tell you. Besides, he 's probably hungry. Don't be so damn selfish."

The trouser, well aimed, ended his speech abruptly as I reached dry land. I worked, thereafter, with wide-open eyes; and before the task was ended, caught sight of no less than fourteen of the river gods of India.

We regained the station in time for the train to Moghul Serai, and, catching the northwest express, arrived in Allahabad late at night. The Strangers' Rest, vagabonds' retreat a half mile from the station, was long since closed; but the Irish superintendent was a light sleeper, and we were soon weighing down two charpoys under the trees of the inner courtyard.

The jangling of the breakfast bell awakened us. The Allahabad "Rest" was famed far and wide for its "European chow." All through the night we had embraced ourselves in joyful anticipation of reviving our flagging memories on the subject of the taste of meat. Marten had even dared to dream a wondrous dream, wherein he had pursued a Gargantuan beefsteak as broad as the arid plain below Benares, in thickness like unto a native hut, across half the land of India, only to wake as he was falling upon it in the foothills of the Himalayas.

"An' the bloomin' thing was steamin' hot," he driveled, as we raced for the dining-room with a mob of ordinarily phlegmatic roadsters,

"an' the juice was runnin' out all over the fields"—we dropped into places at the table—"an' it was that bloody rare that—ah—er—wha—what the devil 's this?" he gasped, pointing at the plate before him.

"Eh?" cried the superintendent, from the doorway.

"I was askin'," murmured Marten, "what kind o' meat this might be."

"That?" smiled our portly host. "Why, 'tis dhried fish, to be sure. The day 's Good Friday, you 'll be remimberin'."

So we were glad rather than sorry that the piety of the English rector, to whom that power was deputed, forbade him issuing tickets to stranded seamen until the next day.

Nothing short of a promise to set up a bottle of arrack would have enticed another sojourner at the Rest outside its shady grove. I set off to explore the city of Allah alone. Life moved sluggishly in its broad, straight streets; for the day's inactivity of Europeans and Eurasians had clogged the wheels of industry. Lepers swarmed under the trees along the boulevard passing the Rest—lepers male and female, without fingers, or lips, or eyelids, some with stumps for feet, and others with great running sores where their faces should have been. Still others had lost their vocal cords, so that their speech, as they crept close up behind the passing sahib to solicit alms, was an inarticulate gurgle.

Great credit should be given to the Mohammedan women of Allahabad and beyond, who, with no Worth to do them service, display individuality of dress sufficient to attract a flagging attention. To be exact, it is n't a dress at all, being merely a jacket and a pair of thin, cotton trousers, full above the knee and close-fitting below, like riding-breeches. The costume originated with its wearers, no doubt. Far be it from me, at least, to accuse them of copying the garb of the sahibs who gallop along the broader thoroughfares.

We slept again under the spreading trees, and might have slept well, had not the spot chanced to be the rendezvous of all the mosquitoes of the northwest provinces. With morning our host marched away at the head of a band of wandering minstrels to carry entertainment to the English rector. The performance endured beyond all precedent. One by one the artists straggled back to the grove, some glad, some sorrowful; and among the latter was Marten. In accordance with our plan to continue towards the Punjab, he had promised to send the "*Guiseppe Sarto*" from the harbor of Bom-

bay, where it had ridden at anchor since the day that we entered Hoogly, to Kurachee at the mouth of the Indus. The classic tale had aroused the old-time sympathy; the rector had listened gravely; the story must surely have brought its reward had not the teller, too cock-sure of his lines, forgotten momentarily the contemplated revision of the text and blurted out the familiar name so distinctly that correction was impossible. He had drawn, therefore, when the division of lots fell, a ticket to Bombay.

There were two reasons why Marten had no desire to visit that port: first, because I had refused to accompany him; second, because the commissioners of that uncharitable presidency have contracted the reprehensible habit of committing to the workhouse the penniless white man taken within their borders. But the die was cast. The law required that the holder of a government ticket depart by the first train, and even had it not, there was no one else in Allahabad to whom to appeal. The grief of the former pearl fisher was acute, lachrymose, in fact. To dry his tears I consented to accompany him to the capital of the next district.

We took leave of the Irishman as darkness fell and before the night was well on its wane had sought a sharp-cornered repose at the station of Jubbulpore. The commissioner of that district, moved by a more carefully constructed tale, granted the stranded mariner a ticket to Jhansi. The route mapped out for him led southward to the junction with the main line, which I, anxious to explore a territory off the beaten track, chose to gain by an unimportant branch. We separated, therefore, promising to meet again next day at Bina.

Returning northward to the village of Khatni, I spent the night on a station settee, and boarded the mixed train that sallies forth daily from that rural terminal. It was in charge of a Eurasian driver and guard, of whom the latter gave me full possession of a roomy compartment adjoining his own. The country was rolling in outline, a series of broad ridges across which the train rose and fell regularly. To right and left stretched jungle, uninhabited and apparently impenetrable. The villages rarely comprised more than a cluster of huts behind the railway bungalow, to which the inhabitants flocked to greet the arrival of the train, the one event that enlivened a monotonous daily existence. Now and then I caught sight of some species of deer bounding away through the low tropical shrubbery, and once of that dreaded beast of India — a tiger. He was a gaunt, agile creature, more dingy in color than those in captivity, who ad-

vanced rapidly, yet almost cautiously, clearing the low jungle growth in long, easy bounds. On the track he halted a moment, gazed scornfully at the sluggard locomotive, then sprang into the thicket and was gone.

We halted at midday at the station of Damoh. Certain that my private carriage could not be invaded in a district where Europeans were almost unknown, I left my knapsack on a bench and retreated to the station buffet. At my exit a strange sight greeted my eyes. Before the door of my compartment was grouped the population of Damoh. Inside stood a native policeman, in khaki and red turban. Under one arm he held the guidebook, a tobacco box, a pipe, a spool of film, and the leaf-wrapped lunch that had made up the contents of my knapsack. The sack itself, a half-dozen letters, and the kodak-cover lay on the floor under his feet. By some stroke of genius he had found the springs that released the back of the kodak, and having laid that on the bench beside him, was complacently turning the screw that unwound the ruined film, to the delight of his admiring fellow-countrymen.

The natives fled at my approach, and the officer, dropping my possessions on the floor, dashed for the shelter of the station-master's office. I followed after to make complaint, and came upon him cowering behind a heap of baggage, his hands tightly clasped over the badge that bore his number.

"He says," interpreted the Eurasian agent, when I had demanded an explanation, "that it is his duty to look in empty compartments for lost articles, but that he has not taken the littlest thing, not even a box of matches, and asks that you forgive him. If you cannot put the queer machine together again, he will."

"These fellows are always prying into things like monkeys," put in the guard. "I 'd make complaint to the inspector at Bina."

A change came over the face of the policeman. Till then he had been the picture of contrition; now he advanced boldly and poured forth a deluge of incomprehensible lingo.

"Why, what 's this?" cried the station-master. "He says you assaulted him."

"Does he look like it?" I demanded.

"No," admitted the agent, "most sahibs leave marks."

"Oh! That 's the old trick," snorted the guard. "He understood the word 'inspector' and thinks he 'll keep out of hot water by making a counter accusation."

"I don't believe the tale," said the agent, "but he insists on making a complaint, and I shall have to telegraph it to the inspector at the end of the line."

The train went on. There being no European officers in the district I could not be placed under arrest, but it was not long before I found the police drag-net drawing close around me. The first station beyond Damoh was a populous town, and among the natives who crowded the platform my attention was drawn to two sturdy fellows in the garb of countrymen who elbowed their way through the throng and stared boldly in upon me. Apparently they had designs on my depleted pocketbook, but, indifferent to so slight a loss, I returned their scowls and settled back in my seat. We were well under way again when I turned from my contemplation of the distant landscape and glanced along the swaying cars. From the next compartment, his eyes glued on my own, hung one of the countrymen. Annoyed, I moved to the opposite side of the car. The head and shoulders of the second rascal protruded from the window ahead. The situation burst upon me. These, then, were "plain-clothes guys" assigned the duty of shadowing me to my destination.

As long as the journey lasted, the detectives sat motionless in their places, their heads twisted halfway round on their shoulders, staring like observant owls at the only means of exit from my compartment. I descended at Bina as twilight fell, and they hung on my heels until I had been accosted by a young Englishman in khaki uniform.

"The station-master at Damoh," began the Briton, "reports that you assaulted a native officer. Will you come with me, please?"

He led the way to the waiting-room, and, producing a notebook, jotted down my story.

"He needed a good drubbing whether he got it or not," he admitted, when I had concluded. "Unfortunately I cannot release you until the inspector comes."

"When will that be?"

"To-morrow, probably, on this same train."

"But I can't afford to be delayed twenty-four hours," I protested. "I 'm short on cash and I 've got to meet a mate."

"I am sorry," returned the Englishman, "but as deputy inspector I have no power in the matter. I do not want to lock you up if you will promise not to leave the station precincts. You may sleep in the first-class waiting-room."

Whether he relied entirely on my promise, I did not learn. At

any rate, he ordered the agent to arrange a cane couch for me, and not long after his departure a coolie arrived from the barracks with such a dinner as I did not often enjoy during my days of liberty. The next day the fare was even more generous, and was supplemented by several delicacies which the Eurasian guard sent from the messroom of the railway bungalow. The latter had not neglected to make public my story, and every hour brought Englishmen, Eurasians, or babus to express their conviction that I was being grossly mistreated. Among them was a leathery little Irishman, a traveling photographer with headquarters in Agra, and a discussion of our common interests ended with his writing me a "chit" to his employer, whom he represented as in need of an assistant.

The deputy inspector hovered about the station, and during one of his visits I asked for a book with which to while away the time. He must have pondered long over the shelves in his bungalow in quest of a volume that would appeal to a sailor of slight education, of American nationality, who was ostensibly suffering severe depression of spirits. His choice demonstrated the unfailing perspicacity of the Briton. He came back bearing a thumb-worn copy of "Bill Nye's History of the United States."

With nightfall came the inspector to listen to a repetition of my story.

"Your account," he announced, "agrees entirely with that of the Eurasian guard. I shall release you at once."

An hour afterward I left Bina and, halting at Jhansi and the free state of Gwalior, arrived in Agra three days later. Until then I had fancied that Marten had passed me during the night of my captivity. But as I alighted, I was surprised to see, in a letter-rack such as is maintained at most Indian stations for the convenience of travelers, a post card across which my name was misspelled in bold, blue letters. On the back was scrawled this simple message: —

GODAWARA, INDIA — April 25th.

FELOW BEECHCOMER: —

Missed the train to Bina becaze I knoked the block off a nigger polisman. They draged me down hear and the comish finned me 15 dibs and then payed the fine and put me rite as far as Agra. I wil pick you up ther on the 27th.

yours,

BUSTED HEAD.

The twenty-seventh was past. The ex-pearl-fisher had evidently gone on, and I saw him no more.

Reduced now to a handful of coppers, I lost no time in seeking out the photographer to whom my "chit" was addressed. He was a Parsee of slender build, dressed in European garb, the trousers of which, fitting his long legs all too snugly, gave him a strangely spider-like appearance. A small velvet skull-cap, embroidered in red and pink with representations of flowers and leaves, sat imperturbable on the top of his head, holding its place with every movement of his lithe body as if nailed there. Suggestion was there none, in his mien, of strange religious beliefs. His English was fluent, his manner affable, yet tempered with a ceremonial coldness, as of one convinced of the necessity of being ever on his dignity.

We came quickly to terms. The shop, well stocked with photographic supplies, was in charge of a Eurasian clerk, and my new duties confined me within the narrow limits of the dark-room. He who would taste purgatory has but to find employment in a photographer's workshop in India. As the door closed behind me, I muttered a determination to hold my new-found position for a fortnight. Before the first set of plates had been transferred to the fixing-bath, the resolution weakened; when an hour had passed, a voice within me whispered that three days' wages would be amply sufficient for all present needs. There were new elements of the photographer's craft to be learned in the Parsee's laboratory, too, such as the use of ice in every process, and during the learning I conducted, all unintentionally, a series of researches in the action of NaCl on the various chemicals in my charge. In short, the stoke-hole of an ocean-liner would have been hibernal by comparison. My employer's tap on the door, with the suggestion that it was time to set up the shutters, did not need to be repeated.

Once in the street, the Parsee hailed a Hindu hansom, a sort of stranded ferryboat set up on two circular table-tops and attached to what had once been a pair of bullocks, and we were driven off. That we reached the residence of my employer before morning and in good health was reason for self-congratulation, for it was nearly a mile distant. The axle-grooves in the misapplied table-tops were as near the center as if they had been bored by a musket in the hands of a blind man at one hundred paces. The driver was with great difficulty inspired to action, and was totally incapable of transmitting such inspiration to his animals. Along the boulevard the craft moved at the cumbersome gait of a land crab; in the rougher streets it pitched and rolled like a derelict in the trough of the waves.

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The Taj Mahal, Agra, India

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The Parsee, accustomed to this fancied solution of the transit problem of Agra, fell into that half doze of dreamy contentment typical of the home-coming suburbanite the world over, and roused himself only when the rattle of the cobble stones of his own courtyard disturbed his ruminations. We alighted equi-distant from two squat bungalows, of which the fire-worshiper gave me leave to enter the former, ere he retired to the bosom of his family in the other. My new home housed a band of servants and a lodger. The deep veranda was curtained by a network of creeping vines that the drought had touched with autumn colors. As I mounted the steps, a long-drawn groan sounded from the semi-darkness, and I was greeted by the sight of the lodger tossing deliriously on one of two dilapidated willow armchairs with which the piazza was furnished. A fever raged within him — the first symptoms, he was convinced, of the plague that would carry him off before dawn. Plainly he did not care to go. The charpoys within were all occupied. I preëmpted the unoccupied chair and listened through the night to the Eurasian's frenzied endeavor to frighten off the grim visitor.

To the grief of the Parsee, I fled from his sweat-box the next afternoon, and, having visited Agra and her incomparable Taj Mahal, took night train to Delhi. The traveler who journeys slowly northward through this land of strange scenes and superstitions loses sight, oftentimes, of the fact that no other political entity includes within its borders so many heterogeneous elements. India is not the dwelling place of one people. The Punjabi of the north differs as much from the Maduran as the Scotchman from the Neapolitan. The hillman and the man of the plains prove on close acquaintance to have little more in common than their brown skins and their misery. Shake your fist at a Madrasi and he will take to his heels. Deny a Gurka the privilege of fighting and you have robbed him of all that makes life worth living.

The casual tourist, noting only slight changes from day to day, may not realize this diversity of population. But let him push on to Shahjehanabad, the city of King John, which they who dwell elsewhere call Delhi. Here is a different world, an Arab world almost, to remind him that Islam once held vast sway in the land of Hind. Easily might he fancy himself again in Damascus. As in "Shaam," here are labyrinthian streets, each given up to a single trade. In shaded nooks and corners the black-bearded scribe plies his art; from many a minaret sounds the chant of the muezzin; the fez vies with

the turban for supremacy. Lean-faced Bedouins and files of cushion-shod camels bring with them a suggestion of the wild sweep of the desert; and, if another touch is needed, over all hovers those crowning symbols of Mohammedan civilization,— filth and pariah dogs.

But with the squalor came new privileges to sahib wanderers. Of Mohammedan eating-shops there were plenty, and never a protest rose against me when I paused to choose from the steaming kettles framed in the doorway. The messes, if the blear-eyed Islamite who stirred the fires under them was to be believed, contained no other flesh than mutton. There were bones in more than one dish that looked suspiciously small for those of the sheep; and the rabbit is not indigenous to India. But quién sabe? The light-skinned vagrant is too thankful, certainly, for an opportunity to satisfy his carniverous tastes to appoint himself a committee of investigation or to inquire into the status of the pure food law.

It was this scent of a more western world perhaps, which soon brought upon me the realization that our unplanned excursion "up country" had carried me a thousand miles afield. I awoke one morning resolved to turn eastward once more. Unfortunately the turning lacked impetus, for in my pocket were four lonely coppers. A half-day's search in the native city failed to bring to light any demand for white-skinned labor, and I concluded to make public my offer of services through the district commissioner.

The afternoon siesta was ended and the élite of Delhi were awakening to new life when I crossed the bridge spanning the railway yards and entered the cantonment and the European section. Over miles of rolling country, thinly streaked by the shade of those few withered trees that had outlived the drought, were scattered the barracks, government offices, and the bungalows of white residents. At the district court a lonely babu clerk welcomed me with the information that the government force was enjoying a Mohammedan holiday, that the next day was sacred to some Hindu saint or sacred ape, and the third, the Christian day of rest. The road to the commissioner's residence passed those of a score of English officials, each situated in a private park, on the lodge gate of which an ensign set forth the name of the owner and the titles which a grateful monarch permitted him to attach thereto. An hour beyond the court, I was confronted by the astonishing pedigree of the ruler of the district and turned aside with bated breath into his estate. The honorable commissioner sahib was not at home, asserted the native butler who was whitewashing can-

A market-day in Delhi, India. Many castes of Hindus and Mohammedans are represented

The Hindu street-sprinkler does not lay much dust

vas shoes on the back veranda; he had gone to the honorable Englishmen's club.

A score of smart traps and dog carts, in charge of gorgeously liveried saïs were drawn up about the long, two-story club-house. On the neighboring courts four pairs of linen-clad Englishmen, surrounded by a select audience of admiring memsahibs and a hundred wondering servants, were playing tennis with that deliberate, dispassionate energy which the Briton of the "clawsses" puts into everything from a casual greeting to a suicide. The honorable commissioner sahib K. C. B., M. A., V. C., Bart. etc., was stretched out in a reclining chair in the smoking-room of the club, his attention divided between a cigarette and cooling beverage and the activities of several other distinguished preservers of the alphabet, who were driving a red and two white balls about a green table with characteristic vim and vigor. The native who pointed out the mighty man from the shelter of a veranda fern refused in an awe-struck whisper to deliver my message until I had threatened to enter this sanctum of social superiority unannounced. The Englishman bellowed a protest at being disturbed, but rose and advanced to the door, glass in hand.

"I say, you know," he cried, in a voice having its domicile in the pit of his stomach, "this is n't my office, my man. I cawn't be attending to official duties day and night. Come to the high-court tomorrow and I will look into your case."

"If any of the gentlemen inside, sir, or you, could put me onto a job where I could earn the price of a tick — "

"A job! In Delhi? Do you fawncy there are full-rigged ships on the Jumna? Come to my office at ten-thirty or eleven in the morning."

"But to-morrow is a holiday."

"Hah! By Jove, so it is! Well, come to my bungalow instead."

"How about some work about the club? Anything at all."

"See here, my man," protested the commissioner, turning away, "this is no employment bureau. I 'm going over for a game of tennis and I 'll bid you good day."

"Then you 'll need someone to chase tennis balls for you," I called after him, "I 'm fairly fast on my feet."

"Chase tennis balls!" cried the governor, coming back. "Do you mean you would run around before a crowd of native servants — you — a white man — and —"

"Sure. Won't you?"

"Eh — er — wha — I? When I play tennis? Why, of course, for exercise; but you were talking about work."

"Well, let 's call it exercise if you 'd rather."

He stared at me a moment in silence, but, being an unusually quick-witted Englishman, grinned as he turned away.

"Very well," he said, over his shoulder, "wait for me over at the second court. I 'll give you a rupee a set — in railway fare — to-morrow."

I was perspiringly engaged as official ball-chaser of the Delhi tennis club until twilight put an end to the sport, fagging three games for the commissioner and as many more for his friends. The reward, however, was not immediately forthcoming; and I turned back as penniless as I had come, towards Delhi, four miles distant. The half-audible melody of a summer night was broken now and then by the patter of native feet along the dusty roadway, but I tramped on for the most part in silence. Once I was startled by a lusty chorus of male voices that burst out suddenly from the darkness ahead in words of my own tongue; and a moment later a squad of red-coats, bound barrackward after a merry afternoon on leave, trooped by me, arm in arm, singing at the top of their lungs, "The Place where the Punkah-wallah Died." It is a sorrowful ditty, this favorite ballad of the Tommy Atkins of India, bearing as it does the final word on the infernal calidity of the peninsula. The punkah-wallah is as insensible to the sun's rays as any living mortal, his station is a shaded veranda, his labor the languid moving of a weightless fan. He of the ballad died of the heat at his post.

Bent on finding lodging in a deserted coach, I slid down the steep slope at the edge of the European section into the broad railway yards. A policeman patrolled the bank above; detectives lurked in the narrow alleyways between the long rows of side-tracked cars; and the headlights of puffing switch-engines turned streaks of the night into broad day. I escaped detection only by vigilant dodging. There were goods' vans without number, an endless forest of them, but they were sealed or loaded with some vile-smelling cargo; passenger coach was there none. I struck off boldly across the tracks towards the lighted station. The glare of a head-light was turned full upon me and without the slightest warning I felt myself launched into space so suddenly that I did not lose my upright posture. The sensation of falling seemed of several minutes' duration, as one experiences in a dream of being thrown from a high building. Long

A lady of quality of Delhi out for a drive

Hindu women drinking cocoanut-milk

Duke U
Libraries

After the world above had disappeared, I landed in utter darkness, all unhurt except for the barking of my nose. Near at hand several live coals gleamed like watching eyes. I had walked into a cinder-pit on the round-house track.

By dint of a cat-like spring from the top of the largest heap of ashes, I grasped the rail above and drew myself out, to find the engine crew preparing to descend into the pit to recover my body. The station platform was crowded. Beyond, surrounded on all sides by the teeming bazaars, lay a thick-wooded park known as Queen's Gardens. Placards on the ten-foot picket fence forbade trespassing after nightfall; but though I climbed the barrier in full sight of strollers and shopkeepers they held their peace, convinced, no doubt, that the sahib who entered at that hour was called thither by official duties. I stretched out in the long grass, but the foliage overhead offered no such shelter as the trees of equatorial Ceylon, and I awoke in the morning dripping wet from the fallen dew.

Again that afternoon I did service at the tennis court, earning two rupees more than the sum required to carry me back to Calcutta, and, returning to the city, boarded the Saturday night express. The European compartment was commodious and furnished not only with a wash-room but with two wooden shelves on which I slept by night, undisturbed by Eurasian collectors. Following the direct line through Cawnpore and Allahabad, the train drew into Howrah on Monday morning. Not once during the journey had my box-stall been invaded. Nine hundred and fifty-four miles I had traveled, in a private car on an express — and the ticket had cost $2.82! Truly, impecunious victims of the Wanderlust should look upon India as the promised land.

CHAPTER XVII

BEYOND THE GANGES

TWO hours after my arrival in Calcutta there entered the American consulate, high up above the Maidan, a white man who should have won the sympathy even of the hard-hearted manager who had denied him admittance to the Sailors' Home for once having deserted that institution for a trip "up-country." He was the possessor of a single rupee. His cotton garments, thanks to dhobies, Ganges mud, and forty-two hundred miles of third-class travel, were threadbare rags through which the tropical sun had reddened his once white skin. Under one arm he carried a tattered, sunburned bundle of the size of a kodak. European residents of a far-off district might have recognized in him the erstwhile ball-chaser of the tennis club of Delhi. In short, 'twas I.

"Years before you were born," said the white-haired sahib who listened to my story, "I was American consul in Calcutta, the chief of whose duties since that day has been to listen to the hard-luck tales of stranded seamen. Times have changed, but the stories have n't, and won't, I suppose, so long as there are women and beer, and land-sharks ashore to turn sailors into beachcombers."

As he talked he filled out a form with a few strokes of a pen.

"This chit," he said, handing it to me, "is good for a week at the Methodist Seamens' Institute. You have small chance of finding work in Calcutta, though you might try Smith Brothers, the American dentists, down the street; and you certainly won't sign on. But get out of town, somewhere, somehow, before the week is over."

"Yes, sir," I answered, opening the door. "Oh, say, Mr. Consul, was there an American fellow by name of Haywood in to see you?"

"Haywood?" mused the old man. "You mean Dick Haywood, that poor seaman who was robbed and beaten on an Italian sailing vessel, and kicked ashore here without his wages?"

"Why — er — yes, sir, that 's him," I replied.

"Yes, I sent him away a week ago, to Rangoon as a consul passenger. But his was an especially sad case. I can't spend money on every Tom, Dick, and Har —"

"Oh! I was n't askin' that, sir," I protested, closing the door behind me.

The Seamens' Institute occupied the second story — and the roof — of a ramshackle building in Lall Bazaar street, just off Dalhousie square. Even about the foot of the stairway hovered a scent of squalor and compulsory piety. On the walls of the main room, huge placards, illuminated with texts from the tale of the prodigal son and the stains of tobacco juice, concealed the ravages which time and brawlers had wrought on the plaster. Magazines and books of the Sunday-school species littered chairs and shelves. Four sear-faced old Tars, grouped about a hunch-backed table, played checkers as if it were an imperative duty, and cursed only in an undertone. For the office door stood open. I entered and tendered my "chit" to the Irish manager.

"Ye 're welcome," he asserted, as he inscribed my name in a huge volume; "but mind ye, this is a Methodist insteetootion and there 's to be no cuss-words on the primaces. An' close the door be'ind ye."

"The cuss-words ye 've picked up," growled a grizzled checker-player, when I had complied with the order, "ye must stow whilst ye 're here. But if ye want to learn some new wans, listen at yon keyhole when he 's workin' his figyurs."

My "chit" entitled me to three meals of forecastle fare a day, the privileges of Sunday-school literature and checkerboards, the use of a crippled cot, and the right to listen each evening to a two-hour sermon in the mission chapel. In the company that gathered around the messboard at noon were few whose mother-tongue was other than my own. The British Isles were ably represented; there were wanderers from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and even two from "the States."

My compatriots were Chicago youths whose partnership seemed singularly appropriate — in India. For the one was named William Curry and the other Clarence Rice.

"D 'y 'iver put yer two eyes on a betther combeenation thon thot to be floatin' about this land uv sunburn an' nakedness?" demanded my companion on the right. "Why, whin they two be on the beach they 'd 'ave only to look wan anither in the face to git a full meal. An' yit they 're after tellin' us they 're goin' to break it oop."

"You bet we be!" ejaculated Rice, forcing an extraordinary mouthful into one cheek to give full play to his tongue. "This bunch don't go pards no more in this man's land!"

"Fer why?" asked a sailor.

"Here 's how," continued Rice. "In Nagpore the commissioner give us a swell set-down an' everything looked good fer tickets to Cally. 'What 's yer name?' sez the guy to Bill, when we come into the office after puttin' away the set-down. 'An' what 's yours?' he sez to me, after Bill had told him. 'Clarence Rice,' sez I. 'Go on,' hollers the commish. 'None o' yer phony names on me! Ye 're a pair o' grafters. Git out o' this office an' out o' Nagpore in a hour or I 'll have ye run in — wid yer currie an' rice!'"

"Yes," sighed Curry, "that 's what they handed us all the way from Bombay. We was three weeks gettin' across."

The meal over, I descended to the street with the one self-supporting guest of the mission. He was a clean-cut, stocky young man of twenty-five, named Gerald James, from Perth, Australia. Until the outbreak of the Boer war he had been a kangaroo hunter in his native land. A year's service in South Africa had aroused his latent Wanderlust and, once discharged, he had turned northward with two companions. Arrived in Calcutta, his partners had joined the police force, while James, weary of bearing arms, had become a salesman in a well-known department store.

I disclosed my accomplishments to his manager that afternoon, but he did not need to glance more than once at my tattered garb to be certain that his staff was complete. At their barracks the Australian's partners assured me that their knowledge of the city proved that the only choice left to a white man stranded in Calcutta was to don a police uniform. Evidently they knew whereof they spoke, for employers to whom I gained access during the days that followed laughed at the notion of hiring white laborers; and, though scores of ships lay at anchor in the Hoogly, their captains refused to listen even to my offer to work my passage. To join the police force, however, would have meant a long sojourn in Calcutta, and at any hour of the day one might catch sight of two coolies hurrying across the Maidan with the corpse of the latest victim of the plague.

Nothing short of foolhardy would have been an attempt to cross on foot the marshy, fever-stricken deltas to the eastward. One possible escape from the city presented itself. Through the Australian officers, whose beat was the station platform, I made the acquaintance of a Eurasian collector who promised to "set me right with the guard" as far as Goalando, on the banks of the Ganges. The signs portended

however, that once arrived there I should be in far worse straits than in the capital.

A chance meeting with a German traveler, who spoke no English, raised my hoard to seven rupees; but the purchase of a new roll of films reduced it again to less than half that amount, and at that low level my fortunes remained for all my efforts. Sartorially, I came off better; for the manager of the mission, calling me into his office one morning, asked my assistance in auditing his account-book, and gave me for the service two duck suits left behind by some former guest. I succeeded, too, in trading my cast-off garments and my dilapidated slippers for a pair of shoes in good condition.

At the Institute, life moved smoothly on. Each day began with a stroll along the docks and two hours of loafing in the courtyard of the Sailors' Home, where seamen, paying off, were wont to display their rolls, and captains had even been known, in earlier days, to seek recruits. After dinner, those of long experience in Oriental lands retired to their crippled cots or a shaded corner of the roof, while the "youngsters" played checkers or pieced together some story from the magazine leaves that the "boy" had thrown into a hasty jumble before morning inspection. From four to sunset was the period of individual initiative, when the inventive set off to try the effect of a new "tale of woe" on beneficent European residents. The "old hands," less ambitious, lighted their pipes and turned out for a promenade around Dalhousie square. Thus passed the sunlit hours. He who had lived through one day with the "Lall Bazaar bunch" knew all the rest.

But as the days were alike, so were the nights different. Each evening of the week was dedicated by long custom to its own special attraction, and newcomers fell as quickly into the routine as a newly arrived prince into the social swirl of the capital. On Monday, supper over, the company rambled off to that section of the Maidan adjoining the viceroy's palace to listen to the weekly band concert, during the course of which the fortunate occasionally picked up a rupee that had fallen from the pocket of some inebriated Tommy Atkins. On Tuesday the rendezvous was the Presbyterian church at the corner of the square; for it was then and there that charitable memsahibs, incorporated into a "Ladies' Aid Society," ended their weekly sewing-bee by distributing among the needy the evidences of their skill with the needle. Hour after hour, a long procession of beachcombers

filed up the narrow stairway of the Institute, to dump strange odds and ends of cosmopolitan raiment on the floor. The night was far spent before the last trade had been consummated.

Wednesday, however, was the red-letter date in the Institute calendar. On that evening came the weekly "social." In company with an "old timer," I set off early for the English church far out beyond Fort William, in the chapel of which we were served such unfamiliar delicacies as ice cream — so the donators dared to name it — and cake. The invitations were issued to "all seamen on shore in the city," but found acceptance, of course, only among the penniless, for the arrack-shops of Calcutta are subject to no early closing law.

In a corner of the chapel sat several young ladies and the junior rector of the parish, a handsome English youth, announced on the program as the president of the meeting. We were favored, however, only with a view of his well-tailored back, for the necessity of furnishing giggle motifs for the fair maidens and the consumption of innumerable cigarettes left him no time for sterner duties.

When the last plate had been licked clean, the gathering resolved itself into a soirée musicale. A snub-nosed English miss fell upon the piano beside the pulpit, and every ragged adventurer who could be dragged within pistol-shot of the maltreated instrument inflicted a song on his indulgent mates. More than once the performer, indifferent to memsahib blushes, refused either to expurgate or curtail the ballad of his choice, and it became the duty of a self-appointed committee to drag him back to his seat.

The suppression of a grog-shop ditty had been followed by several moments of fidgety silence when a chorus of hoarse whispers near the back of the chapel relieved the general embarrassment. A tow-headed beachcomber — a Swede by all seeming — was forced to his feet and advanced self-consciously up the aisle. He was the sorriest-looking "vag" in the gathering. His garb was a strange collection of tatters, through which his sunburned skin peeped out here and there; and his hands, calloused evidences of self-supporting days, hung heavily at his sides. The noises thus far produced would have been prohibited by law in a civilized country, and I settled back in my seat prepared to endure some new auditory atrocity. The Swede, ignoring the stairs by which more conventional mortals mounted, stepped from the floor to the rostrum, and strode to the piano. The audience, grinning nervously, waited for him to turn and bellow forth some halyard chantie. He squatted instead on the recently vacated

stool and, running his stumpy fingers over the keys, fell to playing with unusual skill — Mendelssohn's "Frühlingslied." Such surprises befall, now and then, in the vagabond world. Its denizens are not always the unseeing, unknowing louts that those of a more laundered realm imagine.

"The Swanee River" was suggested as the Swede stalked back to his seat, and the rafters rang with the response; for there was scarcely one of these adventurers, from every corner of the globe, who could not sing it without prompting from beginning to end. During the rendition of "God Save the King," the youthful rector tore himself away from the entrancing maidens, and puffing at his fortieth cigarette, shook us each by the hand as we passed out into the night. A pleasant evening he had spent, evidently, in spite of our presence.

"After all," mused the "old timer," as he hobbled across the Maidan at my side, "Holy Joes is a hell of a lot like other people, ain't they?"

Of the entertainments of other evenings I may not speak with authority, for on that day I had concluded to take the Eurasian collector at his word and escape from Calcutta before I had out-lived my welcome. As I stretched out on the roof of the Institute on my return from the chapel, the man beside me rolled over on his blanket and peered at me through the darkness.

"That you, Franck?" he whispered.

The voice was that of James, the Australian.

"Yes," I answered.

"Some of the lads," came the response, "told me you 're going to hit the trail again."

"I 'm off to-morrow night."

"Where away?"

"Somewhere to the east."

The Australian fell silent a moment, and his voice was apologetic when he spoke again.

"I quit my job to-day. There 's the plague, and the summer coming on, and they expected me to take orders from a babu manager. Calcutta is no good. I 'd like to get to Hong Kong, but the boys say no beachcomber can make it in a year. Think you 'll come anywhere near there?"

"Expect to be there inside a couple of months."

"How if we go pards?" murmured James. "I 've never been on the road much, but I 've bummed around Australia some after kang-

aroos, and I've got fourteen dibs. I'll put that up for my part of the stake."

"Sure," I answered, for of all the inmates of the Institute there was no one I should sooner have chosen as a partner for the rough days to come, than James.

"How'll we make it?" he queried. "It's a long jump."

"I'll set you right to Goalando," I replied, "and you can fix me up on the Ganges boat, if the skipper turns us down. If we can make Chittagong I think we can beat it through the jungle to Mandalay, though the boys say we can't. Then we'll drop down to Rangoon. They say shipping is good there. But let's have it understood that when we hit Hong Kong each one goes where he likes."

"All right," said the Australian, lying down once more.

Thursday passed quickly in the overhauling of our gear, and, having stuffed our possessions into James' carpetbag, we set off at nightfall for the station; not two of us, but three, for Rice of Chicago had invited himself to accompany us.

"What! So many?" cried the guard, when the Eurasian had introduced us, "That's a big bunch of deadheads for one trip. Well, pile on. I'll see that the collectors slip you."

My companions returned to the waiting-room for the carpetbag, and I fell into step with the station policeman, James' former partner. The platform was swarming with a cosmopolitan humanity. Afghans, Sihks, Bengalis, Tamils, and Mohammedans strolled back and forth or took garrulous leave of their departing friends through the train windows. Suddenly my attention was drawn to a priest of Buddha pushing his way through the throng. The yellow robe is rare in northern India, yet it was something more than the garment that led me to poke the policeman in the ribs. For the arms and shoulder of its wearer were white and the face that grinned beneath the shaven poll could have been designed in no other spot on earth than the Emerald Isle!

"Blow me," cried the officer, "if it ain't the Irish Buddhist, the bishop of Rangoon! I met 'im once in Singapore. Everybody in Burma knows 'im;" and he stepped forward with a greeting.

"Do I rimimber ye?" chuckled the priest, "I do thot. Ye were down in the Sthraits. Bless me, and ye're up here on the force now, eh? Oo's yer frind?"

"American," said the Australian, "off fer Chittagong with a pard o' mine."

"Foine!" cried the Irishman. "I 'm bound the same. I 'm second-class, but I 'll see ye on the boat the-morrow."

He passed on and, as the train started, James and Rice tumbled into an empty compartment after me. The guard kept his promise and not once during the night were we disturbed. When daylight awakened us our car stood alone on a side-track at the end of the line.

Goalando was a village of mud huts, perched on a slimy, sloping bank of the Ganges like turtles ready to slip into the stream at the first hint of danger. A shriveled Hindu, frightened speechless by the appearance of three sahibs before his shop door, sold us a stale and fly-specked breakfast, and we turned down towards the river. On the sagging gangplank of a tiny steamer, moored at the foot of the slippery bank, stood the Irish Buddhist, his yellow robe drawn up about his knees, scrubbing his legs in the muddy water.

"Good mornin' te ye!" he called, waving a dripping hand. "Come on board and we 'll have a chat. She don't leave till noon."

"The time 'll pass fast," I suggested, "if you 'll give us your yarn."

"Sure and I will," answered the Irishman, "if ye 'll promise te listen te a good sthraight talk on religion after."

What was it in my appearance that led every religious propagandist to look upon me as a possible convert? Even the missionary from Kansas had loaded me down with tracts.

The Irishman led the way to a cool spot on the deserted deck, sat down Turkish fashion, and, gazing out across the sluggish, brown Ganges, told us the story of an unusual life.

He was born in Dublin in the early fifties. As a young man he had emigrated to America, and, turning "hobo," had traveled through every state in the Union, working here and there. He was not long in convincing both Rice and me that he knew the secrets of the "blind baggage" and the ways of railroad "bulls." More than once he growled out the name of some junction where we, too, had been ditched, and told of running the police gauntlet in cities that rank even to-day as "bad towns."

"Two years after landin' in the States," he continued, "I hit Caleefornia and took a job thruckin' on a blessed fruit-boat in the Sacreminto river, the Acme—"

"What!" I gasped, "The Acme? I was truckman on her in 1902."

"Bless me eyes, were ye now?" cried the Irishman. "'Tis a blessed

shmall worrld. Well, 'twas on the Acme thot I picked oop with a blessed ould sea dog of the name of Blodgett, and we shipped out of Frisco fer Japan. Blodgett, poor b'y, died on the vi'age, and after payin' off I wint on alone, fitchin' oop at last in Rhangoon. Th' English were not houldin' Burma thin, and white min were as rare as Siamese twins. Bless ye, but the natives were glad to see me, and I lived foine. But bist of all, I found the thrue religion, as ye wud call it, or philosophy as it shud be called. Whin I was sure 'twas right I took orders among thim, bein' the foirst blessed white man te turn Buddhist priest."

"Good graft," grinned Rice.

"The remark shows yer ignerance," retorted the son of Erin. "Listen. Oop te the day of me confirmation I was drhawin' a hunder rupees a month. I quit me job. I gave ivery blessed thing I owned to a friend of moine, even te me socks. At the timple, an ould priest made me prisint of a strip of yellow cloth, but they tore it inte three paces te make it warthless, and thin sewed the paces togither agin fer a robe, and I 've worn it or wan loike it iver since. If I 'd put on European clothes agin, fer even wan day, I 'd be expilled. I cut off me hair and as foine a mustache as iver ye saw. If I 'd lit them grow agin I 'd be expilled. If I 'd put on a hat or shoes I 'd be expilled. So wud I if I owned a farthin' of money, if I shud kill so much as a flee, if I 'd dhrink a glass of arrack, if I tuched the ouldest hag in the market place with so much as me finger.

"Foine graft, say you and yer loikes. Listen te more. Whin I tuk the robe, and that 's twinty year an' gone, I become a novice in the faymous Tavoy monistary. Ivery blessed morning of me loife fer foive year, I wint out with the ither novices, huggin' a big rhice bowl aginst me belly. We stopped at ivery blessed house. If we 'd asked fer inything we 'd 'a been expilled. The thrue Buddhists all put something inte the bowl, rhice ginerally and curry, sometoimes fish. Whin they were full we wint back te the monistary, an' all the priests, ould wans and novices, had dinner from what we 'd brung them. Thin we gave the rist te the biggars, fer blessed a thing can we ate from the noon te the nixt sunrise.

"'Twas harrd, the foirst months, atin' nothin' but curry and rhice. Now, bless ye, I 'd not ate European fud if 'twas set down before me. Ivery blessed afternoon I sthudied the history of Buddha and Burmese with the ould priests. 'Twas a foine thing fer me. Before I found the thrue faith I was that blessed ignerent I cud hardly rade me ouwn

tungue. To-day, bless ye, I know eight languages and the ins an' outs of ivery religion on the futstool. I was a vile curser whin I was hoboin' in the States, and 'twas harrd te quit it. But ivery toime I started te say a cuss-ward I thought of the revired Gautama and sid 'blessed' instead, and I 'm master of me ouwn tungue, now."

"Then you really worship the Buddhist god," put in James.

"There agin," cried the Irishman, "is the ignerance of them that follows that champeen faker, Jaysus, the son of Mary and a dhrunken Roman soldier. The Buddhists worship no wan. We riveere Buddha, the foinest man that iver lived, because he showed us the way te attain Nirvana, which is te say hiven. He was no god, but a man loike the rist of us.

"After foive year I was ordayned and foive more I was tachin' th' ither novices and the childr', the Tavoy monistary bein' the big school of Rhangoon. Thin I was made an ilder, thin the abbot of the monistary, thin after fifteen year, the bishop, as ye wud call it, of Rhangoon. Th' abbots and the bishops have no nade te tache, but, bless ye, I 'm tachin' yit, it bein' me duty te give te ithers of the thrue faith what I 've larned.

"'Tis the bishop's place te travel, and in these six years gone I 've visited ivery blessed Buddhist kingdom in Asia, from Japan te Caylon; and I was in Lhassa talkin' with the delai lama long before Yoonghusband wud have dared te show his face there. There 's niver a Buddhist king nor prince thot has n't traited me loike wan uv them, though they 'd have cut the throats of iny ither European. I 'm comin' back now from three months with the prince uv Naypal, taychin' his priests, him givin' me the ticket te Chittagong."

"But if you can't touch money?—" I began.

"In haythen lands we can carry enough te buy our currie and rhice. I hove here three rupees,"—drawing out a knotted handkerchief from the folds of his robe—"if there 's a anna of it lift whin I land in Burma, I 'll give it te the foirst biggar te ask me. In Buddhist cuntries the blessed people give us what we nade, as they 'll give it te inywan ilse thot 's nadin' it. They 're no superstitious, selfish bastes loike these dhirty Hindus. Whin we come te Chittagong ye can stop with me. Thin I 'll give ye a chit te the Tavoy in Rhangoon and ye can stay there as long as iver ye loike. If iver ye have no place te put oop in a Buddhist town, go te the monistary. And if ye till them ye know me, see how foine ye 'll be traited."

"Aye, but we 'd have to know your name," I suggested.

"As I was goin' te tell ye, it 's U (oo) Damalaku."

"Don't sound Irish," I remarked.

"No, indade," laughed the priest, "that 's me Buddhist name. The ould wan was Larry O'Rourke."

"Ye call thot graft, you and yer loikes," he concluded, turning to Rice, "givin' oop yer name and yer hair and a foine mustache, and yer clothes, an' ownin niver a anna, and havin' yer ouwn ignerant rhace laughin' at ye, and havin' yer body burned be the priests whin yer born agin in anither wan! But it 's the thrue philosophy, bless ye, and the roight way te live. Why is it the white min thot come out here die in tin year? D' ye think it 's the climate? Bless ye, no, indade, it 's the sthrong dhrink and the women. Luk at me. Wud ye think I was fifty-five if I had n't told ye?"

He was, certainly, the picture of health; deeply tanned, but with the clear eye and youthful poise of a man twenty years younger. Only one hardship, apparently, had he suffered during two decades of the yellow robe. His feet were broad and stumpy to the point of deformity, heavily calloused, and deeply scarred from years of travel over many a rough and stony highway.

"It 's a strange story," said James.

"I 'm askin' no wan te take me word in this world of liars," responded the Irishman, somewhat testily. "Here ye have the proof."

He thrust a hand inside his robe and, drawing out a small, fat book, laid it in my lap. It contained more than a hundred newspaper clippings, bearing witness to the truth of nearly every assertion he had made. The general trend of all may be gleaned from one article, dated four years earlier. In it the reader was invited to compare the receptions tendered Lord Curzon and the Irish Buddhist in Mandalay. The viceroy, in spite of months of preparation for his visit, had been received coldly by all but the government officials. Damalaku had been welcomed by the entire population, and had walked from the landing stage to the monastery, nearly a half-mile distant, on a roadway carpeted with the hair of the female inhabitants, who knelt in two rows, foreheads to the ground, on either side of the route, with their tresses spread out over it.

When he had despatched a Gargantuan bowl of curry and rice in anticipation of eighteen hours of fasting, the Irishman drew us around him once more and began a long dissertation on the philosophy of Buddha. Two morning trains had poured a multi-colored rabble into the mud village, and the deck of the steamer was crowded with natives

huddled together in close-packed groups, each protected from pollution by a breastwork of bedraggled bundles. Newcomers picked their way gingerly through the network of alleyways between the isolated tribes, holding their garments — when such they wore — close round them, and joined the particular assembly to which their caste assigned them. The Irishman, at first the butt of Hindu stares, was soon surrounded by an excited throng of Burmese travelers.

As the afternoon wore on a diminutive Hindu, of meek and child-like countenance, appeared on board, and, hobbling in and out through the alleyways on a clumsily-fitted wooden leg, fell to distributing the pamphlets that he carried under one arm. His dress stamped him as a native Christian missionary. Suddenly, his eye fell on Damalaku, and he stumped forward open-mouthed.

"What are you, sahib?" he murmured in a wondering tone of voice.

"As you see," replied the Irishman, "I am a Buddhist priest."

"Bu — but what country do you come from?"

"I am from Ireland."

Over the face of the native spread an expression of suffering, as if the awful suspicion that the missionaries to whom he owed his conversion had deceived him, were clutching at his heartstrings.

"Ireland?" he cried, tremulously, "Then you are not a Buddhist! Irishmen are Christians. *All* sahibs are Christians," and he glanced nervously at the grinning Burmese about us.

"Yah! Thot 's what the Christian fakers tell ye," snapped the Irishman. "What 's thot ye 've got?"

The Hindu turned over several of the tracts. They were separate books of the Bible, printed in English and Hindustanee.

"Bah!" said Damalaku, "It 's bad enough to see white Christians. But the man who swallows all the rot the sahib missionaries dish oop fer him, whin the thrue faith lies not a day's distance. is disgoostin'. Ye shud be ashamed of yerself."

"It 's a nice religion," murmured the convert.

"Prove it," snapped the Irishman.

The Hindu accepted the challenge, and for the ensuing half-hour we were witnesses of the novel spectacle of a sahib stoutly defending the faith of the East against a native champion of the religion of the West. Unfortunately, he of the wooden leg was no match for the learned bishop. He began with a parrot-like repetition of Christian catechisms and, having spoken his piece, stood helpless before his adversary. A school boy would have presented the case more convinc-

ingly. The Irishman, who knew the Bible by heart, evidently, from Genesis to Revelations, quoted liberally from the Scriptures in support of his arguments, and, when the Hindu questioned a passage, caught up one of the pamphlets and turned without the slightest hesitation to the page on which it was set forth.

Entangled in a net-work of texts and his own ignorance, the native soon became the laughing-stock of the assembled Burmese. He attempted to withdraw from the controversy by asserting that he spoke no English. Damalaku addressed him in Hindustanee. He pretended even to have forgotten his mother tongue, and snatched childishly at the pamphlets in the hands of the priest. When all other means failed, he fell back on the final subterfuge of the Hindu — and began to weep. Amid roars of laughter he clutched the tracts that the Irishman held out to him and, with tears coursing down his cheeks, hobbled away, looking neither to the right nor left until he had disappeared in the mud village.

The steamer put off an hour later and, winding in and out among the tortuous channels of the delta, landed us at sundown in Chandpore, a replica of Goalando. Our passage — for the captain had refused to "slip" us — had reduced our combined fortunes to less than one fare to Chittagong. We scrambled with the native throng up the slimy bank to the station, resolved to attempt the journey without tickets. It lacked an hour of train time.

"Will you take this to Chittagong?" I asked, thrusting the carpet-bag into the hands of the Irish bishop. "We 're going to beat it."

"Sure," replied the priest, "it shud be easy be night with this crowd."

It soon became apparent, however, that some tattling Hindu had warned the railway officials against us. As we strolled along the platform, peering casually into the empty compartments and striving to assume the air of men of unlimited means, the station-master emerged from his office and fell into step with us.

"The evening breeze is very pleasant, is it not, sahibs?" he murmured, smiling benignly.

"Damn hot," growled James.

"The gentlemen are going by the train?"

"Sure."

"There will be many people go to Chittagong. Much nicer if the sahibs buy their tickets early."

"We bought tickets in Goalando," I answered.

"Ah! Just so," smiled the babu, but the smile suggested that he knew as well as we the destination of those Goalando tickets.

He dropped gradually behind and was swallowed up in the crowd. Rumor runs with incredible swiftness among the Hindus, and the natives who stepped aside to let us pass stared suspiciously at us. We turned back at the end of the platform to find a police officer strolling along a few paces in the rear, ostensibly absorbed in the study of the firmament. Three others flitted in and out among the travelers. The police of Chandpore could not, of course, arrest us, could not, indeed, keep us out of any compartment we chose to enter. But well we knew that, if they reported us on board, the station-master would hold the train until we dismounted, were it not till morning.

We strolled haughtily past the baggage-car and dodged around to the other side of the train. Here in the darkness it should be easy to escape observation. Barely three steps had we taken, however, when we ran almost into the arms of a native sentry, and his cry was answered by at least three others out of the night. The coaches were well guarded indeed.

"The nerve o' that damn babu!" exploded Rice, "thinkin' he can keep you 'n me, what 's got away from half the yard bulls in the States, from holdin' down his two-fer-a-nickle train! Bet he never heard of a hobo. Come on! We 'll put James onto the ropes an' do it in Amurican style. It 'll be like takin' cowries away from a blind nigger baby wid elephanteesees."

We returned to the station to glance at the clock. Rice, in his scorn, could not refrain from making a pair of ass's ears at the astonished babu. With a half hour to spare, we struck off through the bazaars and, munching as we went, picked our way along the track to a box-car a furlong from the station. In an American railroad yard the detectives would have been thickest at this vantage-point, but the babu knew naught of the ways of hoboes.

A triumphant screech from the engine put an end to James' schooling; and, as the silhouette of the fireman before the open furnace door sped by, we darted out of our hiding place. The Australian, urged on by our bellowing, dived at an open window and dragged himself onto the running-board. We swung up after him, and making our way forward, entered an empty compartment.

"Well, we made her," gasped James, throwing aside his topee and mopping his face, "but what about the collectors?"

"Yah! There 's the trouble," scowled Rice.

"The only game," I answered, "is to refuse to wake up."

"Fine!" cried the Chicago lad, "that 's the best scheme yet."

I thought so too—until later.

We had slept two hours, perhaps, possibly three, when our dreams were disturbed by the thump of a ticket-punch on the window-sill and the unmistakable dulcet of a Eurasian:—

"Tickets, please, sahibs. Give me your tickets."

We lay on our backs, imperturbable.

"Tickets, sahibs!" shrieked the Eurasian.

James was snoring lightly and peacefully; Rice, with long-drawn snarls, like the death-rattle of a war-horse, as if striving not merely to deceive the collector but to frighten him off.

"Tickets, I say, sahibs, tickets!"

The voice was high-pitched now, and the rapping of the punch echoed back to us from the station building. Three more collectors joined their colleague and murderously assaulted the car door.

"Hello there! Tickets! It 's the collector! Wake up! *Tickets!*"

The uproar drowned the mumble in which Rice cursed the unusual length of the train's halt. An official thrust an arm through the open window and shook me savagely. The others, bellowing angrily, followed his example, and rolled us back and forth on the hard benches. The helmet that had shaded my eyes rolled to the floor. Rice, who had lain down, as he afterward expressed it, "wrong end to," was caught by the ankle and dragged to the window. Still we slumbered.

Suddenly the uproar subsided.

"What 's this?" cried a sterner voice outside.

I opened my eyes ever so slightly and caught a fleeting glimpse of a Eurasian in the uniform of a station-master.

"Let them alone," he ordered, "they 've had too much arrack. No matter if their tickets are not punched at every station."

The train started with a jerk, the station lights faded, and we sat up simultaneously.

"Worked like a charm," chuckled James.

"Thought it would," I answered.

"Great!" grinned Rice, "Would n't go in the States, though;" and we lay down again.

Three more times during the night we were assaulted by a force of collectors, but slumbered peacefully on. When I awoke again it

was broad daylight. The train was speeding along through unpeopled jungle. Evidently it was behind time, or we should long since have reached Chittagong. James stirred on his bench, sat up, and took to filling his pipe. Rice opened his eyes a moment later and fished through his pockets for the "makings" of a cigarette. I took seat at the window and stared ahead for signs of the seaport.

Suddenly a white mile-post flashed by, and my shout of astonishment brought James and Rice to their feet in alarm. My eyes had deceived me, perhaps, but I fancied the stone had borne three figures. We crowded together and waited anxiously for the next.

"There it is!" cried my companions, in chorus. "Two hundred and seventy-three!"

"Two hundred and seventy-three miles?" shrieked James. "The whole run to Chitty's not half that far! Soorah Budjah! Where have we been snaked off to?"

"Let's see whether we're going or coming," I suggested.

"Two hundred and seventy-four!" bellowed Rice, who was riding half out the window, "An' they ain't no dot between 'em! We're goin', all right!"

"Oh Lord! And all our swag!" groaned James.

Still it was possible that the posts indicated the distance to some other city than Chittagong, and we sat down and waited anxiously until the train drew up at the next station. It was nothing more than a bamboo hamlet in the wilderness. We sprang out and hurried towards the babu station-master.

"How soon do we get to Chittagong?" I demanded.

"Chittagong!" gasped the babu. "Why, you going wrong, sahibs. Chittagong two hundred and eighty miles down there," and he pointed along the track the way we had come.

"Then why the deuce did they let us take this train?" shouted James. "Where is it going, anyway?"

"This train going in Assam," replied the native, "Where gentlemen coming from? Sure you wishing go Chittagong? Let me see tickets."

"Oh, we know where we want to go, all right," said James, hastily. "We're coming from Chandpore."

"Ah! Chandpore!" smiled the babu. "I understand. Train from Chandpore breaking in two thirty miles further. Part going to Chittagong, part coming here. You sitting in wrong car. Maybe

you sleep?" "But," he added, as a puzzled frown passed over his face, "many collectors are at this junction. Why they have not wake you?"

"That 's what I 'd like to know," bellowed Rice. "This is a thunder of a railroad."

The shriek of a locomotive sounded, and a moment later a south-bound train drew up on the switch.

"This train going in Chittagong," said the babu, "you can go with it."

"Do you think we 're going to pay our fare for two hundred and eighty miles," demanded James, "just because the collectors did n't tell us to change?"

"Oh, no, sahibs," breathed the babu, "I will tell it to the guard. Let me take tickets that I show him."

"But we 'll have to hurry or we 'll miss her," said James, starting towards the side-tracked train.

"Oh, plenty time," murmured the babu, "Let me take tickets;" and he stretched out a hand.

Apparently it had come to a "show down."

"Holy cats!" screamed Rice, suddenly springing into the air. "I remember now! I had all the bloody tickets in my pocket, and when the collector hollered fer 'em I give 'em to him. But I went to sleep an' he never give 'em back."

"Very poor collector," condoled the babu, "but, never mind, I will tell to the guard how it is."

The north-bound train pulled out and he stepped across the track to chatter a moment in excited Hindustanee with a uniformed half-breed.

"Ah! Very nice!" he smiled, coming back, "On this train is riding the sahib superintendent. You telling him and he tell you what do."

Our jaws fell. No doubt it seemed "very nice" to the babu, but had we suspected that there was an Englishman within a hundred miles of where we stood, Rice certainly would have invented no such tale. It was too late to retract, however, and the Chicago lad, as the author of the story and the only one familiar with its details, crossed to the first-class coach. At his first words, a burly Englishman, dressed in light khaki, opened the door of a compartment and stepped down to the ground.

"It 's all off," muttered James.

But the Englishman listened gravely, nodded his head twice or thrice, and pointed towards a third-class coach.

"Did n't call me a liar an' did n't say he believed me," explained Rice, when the compartment door had closed behind us. "Says he 'll look into the matter when we get back to the junction. I see somethin' doin' when we land there."

Late in the afternoon the train drew up at the scene of our pummelling the night before, and the Englishman led the way to the station-master's quarters. That official, however, was as certain as we that no tickets for Chittagong had been taken up.

"Three sahibs have gone through in the night," asserted his assistant, "but with much noise we have not made them awake. Certainly our collectors do not take up Chittagong tickets here."

"You see how it is, my men?" said the superintendent, "If they had been taken up he would have them."

"By thunder," shouted Rice, "I 'll bet a pack o' Sweet-Caps the guy that took 'em was no collector at all. He was some bloomin' nigger that wanted to take his family to Chittagong."

"It is possible," replied the Englishman, as gravely as though he were discussing a philosophical problem, "but the company does not guarantee travelers against theft. As we have found no trace of the tickets you will have to pay your fare to Chittagong."

"We can't!" cried the three of us, in chorus. On that point we could second Rice without feeling a prick of conscience.

"Yes," murmured the superintendent, as if he had not heard, "you will have to pay."

He took a turn about the platform.

"But we 're busted!" we wailed, when he again stopped before us.

"Get into your compartment," he said, quietly. "I will wire the agent at Chittagong to collect three fares."

"I tell you we have n't got —"

But he was already out of earshot. No doubt he was convinced that with time for reflection we should be able to unearth several rupees which we had forgotten. Certainly he did not believe that white men would venture into that wilderness without money — no Englishman of his class would.

Dark night had fallen when we alighted at Chittagong. A babu agent awaited us, telegram in hand. Luckily, his superior, an Englishman, had retired to his bungalow. The Hindu led the way to a lighted window and read the message aloud. It was a curt order to

collect three fares, with never a hint of the unimportant detail we had confided to the superintendent.

The agent, of course, would not be convinced of our indigency. To our every protest he replied unmoved: —

"But you must pay, sahibs."

"You bloody fool!" shrieked Rice, "How can we pay when we 're busted?"

"You may not pass through the gates until you have paid," returned the babu.

"All right," said James, wearily, "we won't. Show us where we 're going to sleep and send up supper."

The shot told. The babu unfolded the telegram meditatively and backed up to the window to read it again. He scratched his head in perplexity, stood now on one leg, now on the other, and stared from us to the paper in his hand. Then he trudged down the platform to seek advice of the baggage master, paused to chatter with the telegraph operator, and returned to the truck on which we were seated.

"Oh, sahibs," he wailed, "we have not food and to sleep in the station, and the superintendent has not said what I shall do. But you will give me your names to write, and to-morrow you will come back and pay the fares; and if you do not, I will send your names to the superintendent —"

"And he can have 'em framed and hung up in his bungalow," concluded James. "Sure! You can have all the names you want."

We gave them and turned away, pausing at the gate to ask the collector to direct us to the Buddhist monastery. He chuckled at the fancied joke and refused for some time to take our question seriously.

"It is very far," he answered at last. "You are going through the town, making many turns, and through the forest and over the hill before you are coming to it by the crossroads."

In spite of these explicit directions we wandered a full two hours along soft roadways and over rolling hillocks without locating the object of our search. Pedestrians listened respectfully to our inquiries, but though we used every word in our Oriental vocabularies that could in any way be applied to a religious edifice, they shook their heads in perplexity. One spot at the intersection of two roads seemed to answer vaguely to the collector's description, but it was surrounded on every side by dense groves in which there was no sound of human occupancy.

We were passing it for the fourth time when a gruff voice sounded

from the edge of the woods and a native policeman, toga-clad and armed with a musket, stepped towards us. His face was almost invisible in the darkness; the whites of his eyes, gleaming plainly, gave him the uncanny appearance of a masked figure.

"Buddha!" cried James, with a sweeping gesture, "Boodha, Buddhaha, Boodista? Buddha sahib keh bungalow kéhdereh?"

The officer shivered and peered nervously about him, like one convinced of the white man's power over hobgoblins. As we turned away, however, he uttered a triumphant shout and dashed off into the forest. A moment later the sound of human voices came to us from the depth of the grove; a light flashed through the trees, swung to and fro as it advanced; and out of the woods, a lantern high above their heads, strode three yellow-robed figures.

"Bless me!" cried the tallest, in stentorian tones, "It 's the' Americans! Where in the name uv white min have ye been spindin' the blessed day? Lucky y' are te foind our house in th' woods on a black noight like this. It 's hungry ye 'll be. Come te the monistary."

He led the way through the forest to a square, one-story building, flanked by smaller structures; one of a score of native priests set before us a cold supper of currie and rice, gathered by the novices early that morning, and a half-hour later we turned in on three charpoys in a bamboo cottage behind the main edifice.

As the sun was declining the next afternoon we climbed the highest of the verdure-clad hills on which Chittagong is built, to seek information from the district commissioner. For the native residents, priest or layman, knew naught of the route to Mandalay. The governor, aroused from a Sunday siesta on his vine-curtained veranda, received us kindly, nay, delightedly, and, having called a servant to minister to our thirst, went in person to astonish his wife with the announcement of European callers. That lady, being duly introduced, consented, upon the solicitation of her husband, to contribute to our entertainment at the piano.

White men come rarely to Chittagong. Chatting, like social equals, with a district ruler stretched out in a reclining chair between us, we came near to forgetting for the nonce that we were mere beachcombers."

"And now, of course," said our host, when James had concluded an expurgated account of our journey from Calcutta, "you will wait for the steamer to Rangoon?"

"Why, no, Mr. Commissioner," I answered, "we 're going to

walk overland to Mandalay, and we took the liberty of calling on you to —"

"Mandalay!" gasped the Englishman, dropping his slippered feet to the floor, "*Walk* to Man— Why, my dear fellow, come here a moment."

He rose and stepped to a corner of the veranda, and, raising an arm, pointed away to the eastward.

"That," he said, almost sadly, "is the way to Mandalay. Does that look like a country to be traversed on foot?"

It did not, certainly. Beyond the river, dotted here and there with crazy-quilt sails, lay a primeval wilderness. Range after range of bold hills and mountain chains commanded the landscape, filling the view with their stern summits until they were lost in the blue and hazy eastern horizon. At the very brink of the river began a riotous tropical jungle, covering hill and valley as far as the eye could see, and broken nowhere in all its extent by clearing or the suggestion of a pathway.

"There," went on the commissioner, "is one of the wildest regions under British rule. Tigers abound, snakes sun themselves on every bush, wild animals lie in wait in every thicket. The valleys are full of dacoits — savage outlaws that even the government fears; and the spring freshets have made the mountain streams raging torrents. There is absolutely nothing to guide you. If you succeeded in traveling a mile after crossing the river, you would be hopelessly lost; and if you were not, what would you eat and drink in that wilderness?"

"Why," said James, "we 'd eat the wild animals and drink the mountain streams. Of course we 'd carry a compass. That 's what we do in the Australian Bush."

"We thought you might have a map," I put in.

The commissioner stepped into the bungalow. The music ceased and the player followed her husband out onto the veranda.

"This," he said, spreading out a chart he carried, "is the latest map of the region. You must n 't suppose, as many people do, that all India has been explored and charted. You see for yourselves that there is nothing between Chittagong and the Irawaddy but a few wavy lines to represent mountain ranges. That 's all any map shows and all any civilized man knows of that section. Bah! Your scheme is idiotic. You might as well try to walk to Lhassa."

He rolled up the map and dropped again into his chair.

"By the way," he asked, "where are you putting up in Chittagong?"

"We're living at the Buddhist monastery," I answered.

"What!" he shouted, springing up once more. "In the Buddhist monastery? You! White men and Christians? Disgraceful! Why, as the governor of this district, I forbid it. Why haven't you gone to the Sailors' Home?"

"Never imagined for a moment," I replied, "that there was a Home in a little port like this."

"There is, and a fine one," answered the commissioner, "and just waiting for someone to occupy it."

"No place for us," retorted James. "We're busted."

"Nothing to do with it," cried the Englishman. "Money or no money, you'll stop there while you're here. I'll write you a chit to the manager at once."

Had we rented by cable some private estate we could not have been more comfortably domiciled than in the Sailors' Home of Chittagong. The city itself was a garden-spot, the Home a picturesque white bungalow, set in the edge of the forest on the river bank. The broad lawn before it was several acres in extent, the graveled walk led through patches of brilliant flowers. Within, the building was furnished almost extravagantly. The library numbered fully a thousand volumes — by no means confined to the output of mission publishing houses — in one corner were ranged the latest English and American magazines, their leaves still uncut. The parlor was carpeted with mats, the dining-room furnished with punkahs. In the recreation room, instead of a dozen broken and greasy checkerboards, stood a pool-table, and — *comble de combles* — a piano!

Three native servants, housed in an adjoining cottage, were at our beck and call. For, though weeks had passed since the Home had sheltered a guest, everything was as ready for our accommodation as though the manager — for once a babu — had been living in daily expectation of our arrival.

An hour after our installation, we were reclining in veranda chairs with our feet on the railing, watching the cook in hot pursuit of one of the chickens that was doomed to appear before us in the evening currie, when a white man turned into the grounds and advanced listlessly, swinging his cane and striking off a head here and there among the tall flowers that bordered the route. Once in the shade of the bungalow, he sprang up the steps with outstretched hand, and, having vociferated his joy at the meeting, sat down beside us. Whatever other vocation he professed, he was a consummate storyteller,

and entertained us with tales of frontier life until the shades of night fell. Suddenly, he interrupted a story at its most interesting point to cry out, à propos of nothing at all: —

"The commissioner sent for me this afternoon."

"That so?" queried James.

"Yes, he thinks you fellows are going to start to Mandalay on foot. Mighty good joke, that," and he fell to chuckling, glancing askance at us the while.

"No joke at all," I protested. "We *are* going on foot, just as soon as we can find the road."

"Don't try it!" cried the Englishman, raising his cane aloft to emphasize his warning. "I haven't introduced myself. I am chief of police for Chittagong. The commissioner has given orders that you must not go. The force has been ordered to watch you, the boatmen forbidden to row you across the river. Don't try it, or *my* department will be called in," and with that he dropped the subject abruptly and launched forth into another yarn.

Late that night, when Rice had been prevailed upon to leave off pounding atrocious discords on the piano, we made a startling discovery. There was not a bed in the Home! While James hurried off to rout out a servant, we of "the States" went carefully through each room with the parlor lamp, peering under tables and opening drawers in the hope of finding at least a ship's hammock. We were still engaged in the search when the Australian returned with a frightened native, who assured us that we were wasting our efforts. There had never been a bed nor a charpoy in the Home. Just why, he could not say. Probably because the manager babu had forgotten to get them. Other sailor sahibs had slept, he knew not where, but they had made no protest.

It was too late to appeal to the manager babu to correct his oversight. We turned in side by side on the pool table and took turns in falling off at regular intervals through the night.

With the first grey of dawn we slipped out the back door of the bungalow and struck off through the forest towards the uninhabited river bank beyond. For in spite of the warning of the chief of police and Rice's protest that we should "hold down such a swell joint" as long as possible, we had decided by majority vote to attempt the overland journey.

To elude the police force was easy; to escape the jungle, quite a different matter. A full two hours we tore our way through the

undergrowth along the river without finding a single break in the sheer eastern bank that we should have dared to swim for. Rice grew petulant, our appetites aggressive, and we turned back promising ourselves to continue the search for a route on the following day.

The servants at the Home, knowing the predeliction of sahibs for morning strolls, greeted our return with grinning servility and an ample *chotah hazry*. While we were eating, the chief of police bounded into the room with a new story and the information that the commissioner wished to see us at once; and bounded away again, protesting that he was being worked to death.

In his bungalow on the hilltop, the ruler of the district was pacing back and forth between obsequious rows of secretaries and assistants.

"I have given orders that you are not to start for Mandalay," he began, without preliminary.

"And how the deuce will we get out any other way?" demanded James.

"If you were killed in the jungle," went on the governor, as if he had heard nothing, "your governments would blame me. But, of course, I have no intention of keeping you in Chittagong. I have arranged, therefore, with the agents of the weekly steamer to give you deck passages, with European food, to Rangoon. Apply to them at once and be ready to start to-morrow morning."

This proposition found favor with James, and with two against me I was forced to yield or be unfaithful to our partnership. We returned to the monastery that afternoon to bid the Irish bishop farewell and to get the note that he had promised us. In a blinding tropical shower we were rowed out to the steamer *Meanachy* next morning and for four days following lolled about the winch, on the drum of which the Chinese steward served our "European chow." The steamer drifted slowly down the eastern coast of the Bay of Bengal, touching at Akyab, and, rounding the delta of the Irawaddy on the morning of May thirteenth, dropped anchor three hours later in the harbor of Rangoon.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE LAND OF PAGODAS

SOMEWHAT back from the wharves, yet within earshot of the cadenced song of stevedores and coal-heavers, stand two shaded bungalows, well-known among the inhabitants of the metropolis of Burma. The larger is the Sailors' Home, the less important the Seamen's Mission. Rangoon, it transpired, was suffering a double visitation of beachcombers and the plague. The protest of the managers of both mariners' institutions, that they were already "full up with dead ones," gave us small grief. For were we not sure of admission to a more interesting residence? But there was real cause for wailing in the assurance of the cosmopolitan band who listened to the tale of our "get-away" from Calcutta, that we had fallen on one of the least auspicious ports in the Orient.

There was work ashore for all hands, white or brown, for the servants of the plague doctors had daubed on housewalls throughout the city the enticing offer:—"Dead Rats — Two pice each." But even the penniless seamen, who had learned during long enforced residence in the Burmese capital that their services were useful in no other field, scorned to turn terriers.

It was my bad fortune to reach Rangoon a bit too late to be greeted by an old acquaintance.

"Up to tree day ago," cried one of the band at the Home, "dere was one oder Yank on der beach here, ja. Min he made a pier' ead yump by er tramp tru der Straits."

"That so?" I queried.

"Aye," put in another of the boys, "'e was a slim chap with a bloody lot of mouth, always looking fer a scrap, but keepin' 'is weather-eye peeled fer the Bobbies."

"Bet a hat," I shouted, "that I knew him. Was n't his name Haywood?"

"Dick 'Aywood, aye," answered the tar; "leastway that was the 'andle 'e went by. But 'e 's off now fer good, an' bloody glad we are to be clear of 'im."

We struck off through the city, taking leave of Rice before the door of the first European official whose beneficence he chose to investigate. The native town, squatting on the flat plain along the river, was reminiscent of the Western world. Its streets were wide and parallel, as streets should be, no doubt, yet lacking the picturesqueness of narrow, meandering passageways, so common elsewhere in the Orient. Sidewalks were there none, of course. Pedestrians mingled with vehicles and disputed the way with laden animals and human beasts of burden. Before and behind, on either side, as far as the eye could see, stretched unbroken vistas of heterogeneous wares and yawning shopkeepers. For to the Burman no other vocation compares with that of merchant. A flat city it was, with small, two-story hovels for the most part, above which gleamed a few golden pagodas.

In the suburbs the scene was different. Vine-grown bungalows and squat barracks littered a rolling, lightly-wooded country that sloped away to a clear-cut horizon. Here and there shimmered a sun-flecked lake; along umbrageous highways strolled khaki-clad mortals with white faces and a familiar vocabulary. High above all else, as the Eiffel tower over Paris, soared the pride of Burma, the Shwe Dagón pagoda.

We climbed the endless vaulted stairway to the sacred hilltop, in company with hundreds of natives bearing their shoes, when such they possessed, in their hands, and amid the bedlam of clamoring hawkers. Now and again a pious pilgrim glanced at our rough-shod feet, but smiled indulgently and passed us by. The village of shrines at the summit of the knoll was an animated bazaar, stocked with every devotional requisite from bottled arrack to pet snakes. Even the tables of the money-changers and the desks of the scribes were not lacking to complete the picture.

Barefooted worshipers, male and female, wandered among the glittering topes, setting up candles or spreading out lotus blossoms before the serene-visaged statues; kowtowing now and then, but puffing incessantly, one and all, at long native cigars. Near the mouth of the humanity-belching stairway creaked a diminutive clothes-reel overburdened with such booty as the red-man, returned from a scalping expedition, hangs over the entrance to his wigwam. While we marveled, a panting matron with close-cropped head pushed past us and added to the display a switch of oily, jet-black hair. Her prayer had been granted and the shorn locks bore witness to her gratitude.

Shrines and topes were but doll-houses compared with the central mass of masonry, towering upward to neck-craning height and covered with untarnished gold from tapering apex to swollen base. It was a monument all too brilliant in the blazing sunlight. Tiny pagodas floated before our eyes as we glanced for relief into the deep shadows of the encircling sanctuaries. Burmen from the sea to the sources of the Irawaddy are inordinately proud of the Shwe Dagón. Its destruction, they are convinced, would bring national disaster in its train. Their rulers have turned this superstition to account. Down at the edge of the cantonment below, John Bull has mounted two heavy cannon that are trained on the pagoda day and night. A brief word of command from the officer in charge would reduce the sacred edifice to a tumbled mass of ruins. Ten regiments of red-coats would be far less effective than those two pieces of ordnance, in maintaining the sahib sway over Burma.

Rice of Chicago scorned to share the simple life among the wearers of the yellow robe. As the day waned, he joined us at the Home with the announcement that he had "dug up a swell graft" among the European residents and, declining to disclose the details thereof, strutted away towards the harbor.

We set off alone, therefore, the Australian and I, to the monastery that had witnessed the metamorphosis of the erstwhile Larry O'Rourke. The far-famed institution occupied an extensive estate flanking Godwin Road, a broad, shaded thoroughfare leading to the Shwe Dagón. Its grounds were surrounded by a crumbling wall and a shallow, weed-choked ditch that could not be styled moat for lack of water. Three badly-warped planks, nailed together into a drawbridge that would not draw, led through a breach in the western wall, the main entrance, evidently, for many a year.

Inside was a teeming village of light, two-story buildings, with deep verandas above and below, scattered pell-mell about the inclosure as if they had been constructed in some gigantic carpenter-shop, shipped to their destination, and left where the expressman had thrown them off. The irregular plots and courts between them were trodden bare and hard or were ankle-deep in loose sand. Here and there swayed a tall, untrimmed tree, but within the area was neither grass nor flower nor garden patch. For the priest of Buddha, forbidden to kill even a grub or an earthworm, may not till the soil about his dwelling.

The surrounding town was no more densely populated than the

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Bungalows along the way in rural Burma

Women of the Malay Peninsula wear nothing above the waist-line and not much below it

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monastery village. Besides a small army of servants, male and female, in layman garb, there were yellow-robed figures everywhere. Wrinkled, sear-faced seekers after Nirvana squatted in groups on the verandas, poring over texts in the weak light of the dying day. More sprightly priests, holding a fold of their gowns over an arm, strolled back and forth across the barren grounds. Scores of novices, small boys and youths, saffron-clad and hairless like their elders, flitted in and out among the buildings, shouting gleefully at their games.

We turned to the first bungalow, a servants' cottage evidently; for there were both men and women and no shaven polls in the group that crowded the veranda railing. Twice we addressed them in English, once in Hindustanee; but the only response was a babel of strange words that rose to an uproar. The women screamed excitedly, the men shouted half-angrily, half-beseechingly and motioned to us to be off. As we mounted the steps the shrieking folk took to their heels and tumbled through the doors of the cottage, or over the ends of the veranda, leaving only a few decrepit crones and grandsires to keep us company.

Here was no such welcome as the Irishman had prophesied; but first impressions count for little in the Orient, and we sat down to await developments. For a time the driveling ancients stared vacantly upon us, mumbling childishly to themselves. Then there arose a chorus of excited whispers; around the corners of the bungalow peered gaping brown faces that disappeared quickly when we made the least movement. At last a native whom we had not seen before advanced bravely to the foot of the steps.

"Goo' evening," he stammered, "will you not go way? There is not plague in the monastery."

"Eh!" cried James, "We'd be more like to go if there was."

"But are the sahibs not doctors?" queried the Burman.

The suggestion set the Australian choking with laughter.

"Doctors!" I gasped, "We're sailors, and we were sent by Damalaku."

The babu uttered a mighty shout and dashed up the steps. The fugitives swarmed upon the veranda from all sides and crowded around us, laughing and chattering.

"They all running way when you coming," explained the spokesman, "because they thinking you plague doctors and they 'fraid."

"Of what?" asked James.

"Sahib doctors feel all over," shuddered the babu, "not nice."

Our errand explained, the interpreter set off to announce our arrival to the head priest, and the grinning servants squatted in a semicircle about us. Suddenly James raised a hand and pointed towards the breach in the wall.

"Seems other beachcombers know this graft," he laughed.

A burly negro, dressed in an old sweater of the White Star line and the rags and tatters of what had once been overalls and jumper, stepped into the inclosure. Anxious to make a favorable impression at the outset, he had halted in the street to remove his shoes, and, carrying them in one hand, he shuffled through the sand in his bare feet, about the ankles of which clung the remnants of a bright red pair of socks. In color, he was many degrees darker than the Burmese; and the apologetic, almost penitent mien with which he approached struck the assembled natives as so incongruous in one attired as a European that they greeted him with roars of laughter. When he addressed them in English they shrieked the louder, and left him to stand contritely at the foot of the steps until we, as the honored guests of the evening, had been provided for. There is needed more than the whiteman's tongue and garb to be accepted as a sahib in British-India.

The babu returned, and, bidding us follow, led the way back into the village and up the out-door stairway of one of the largest bungalows. Inside, under a sputtering torch, squatted an aged priest of sour and leathery countenance. He squinted a moment at us in silence, and then demanded, through the interpreter, an account of our meeting with Damalaku. We soon convinced him that the note was no forgery. He dismissed us with a grimace that might have been expressive either of mirth or annoyance, and the babu set off towards a neighboring bungalow.

"You are sleeping in here," he said, stopping several paces from the cottage, "Goo' night."

"Thunder!" muttered James, as we started to mount the steps to a deserted veranda, "He might, at least, have told 'em what we want. If there 's anything I hate, it 's talking to natives on my fingers and listening to their jabber all the evening without an interpreter. He—"

"Hello, Jack!" shouted a voice above us, "Where the blazes did you come from?"

We fell back in astonishment and looked up. Framed in the doorway of the brightly-lighted bungalow stood a white priest.

"Englishmen?" he queried.

"I'm American," I apologized.

"The thunder you are!" cried the priest, "So 'm I. On the beach, eh?"

"Yep," I answered.

"Well, come up on deck, mates. But first," he added hastily, in more solemn tones, "in respect for the revered Buddha and his disciples, take off your shoes down there."

"And socks?" I asked, struggling with a knot in one of my laces.

"Naw," returned the priest, "just the kicks."

We crossed the veranda and, having deposited our shoes in a sort of washtub outside the door, followed the renegade inside.

The typical Indian bungalow is a very simple structure. The Oriental carpenter considers his task finished when he has thrown together — if the actions of so apathetic a workman may be so described — a frame-work of light poles, boarded them up on the outside, and tossed a roof of thatch on top. The interior he leaves to take care of itself, and the result is a dwelling as rough and ungarnished as an American hay-loft.

The room in which we found ourselves was some twenty feet square and extremely low of ceiling, its skeleton of unhewn beams all exposed, like the ribs of a cargo steamer. Two rectangular openings in opposite walls, innocent of frame or glass, admitted a current of night air that made the chamber almost habitable. In the center of the floor, which was polished smooth and shining by the shuffle of bare feet, was a large grass mat; while beyond, on a low daïs. squatted a gorgeous, life-sized statue of Buddha.

At the moment of our appearance, a score of native priests were crouched on as many small mats ranged round the walls. They rose slowly, really agog with curiosity, yet striving to maintain that phlegmatic air of indifference that is cultivated among them, and grouped themselves about us. In the brilliant light cast by several lamps and long rows of candles before the statue, we had our first clear view of the American priest. He was tall and thin of figure, yet sinewy, with a suggestion of hidden strength. His face, gaunt and lantern-jawed, was seared and weather-beaten and marked with the unmistakable lines of hardships and dissipation. It was easy to see that he was a recruit from the ranks of labor. His hands were coarse and disproportionately large. As he moved they hung half open, his elbows a bit bent, as though he were ready at a word of command to grasp a

rope or a shovel. The rules of the priesthood had not been framed to enhance his particular style of beauty. A thick shock of hair would have concealed the displeasing outline of a bullet head, the yellow robe hung in loose folds about his lank form, his feet were broad and stub-toed. But it was none of these points in his physical make-up that caused James to choke with suppressed mirth. A Buddhist priest, be it remembered, must ever keep aloof from things feminine. The American had been a sailor, and his bare arms were tattooed from wrist to shoulder with female figures that would have outdone those on the raciest posters of a burlesque show!

Our hosts placed mats for us in a corner of the room and brought forth a huge bowl of rice and a smaller one of blistering currie. While we scooped up handfuls alternately from the dishes, they squatted on their haunches close at hand, watching us, it must be admitted, somewhat hungrily. The American had not yet mastered the native tongue. His interpreter was a youthful priest who spoke fluent English. With these two at our elbows, the conversation did not drag. The youth was a human interrogation point; the convert, for the nonce, a long-stranded mariner eager for news of the world outside. Were " the boys " still signing on in Liverpool at three pound ten? Did captains still ship out of Frisco with shanghaied crews, as of yore? Were the Home in Marseilles and the Mission in Sydney still closed to beachcombers? Was the Peter Rickmers still above the waves? His questions fell fast and furious, interspersed with queries from his companion. Then he grew reminiscent and told us, in the vocabulary of them that go down to the sea in ships, tales of his days before the mast and of his uninspiring adventures in distant ports. For the moment he was plain Jack Tar again, swapping yarns with his fellows.

The youth rose at last and laid a hand on the convert's shoulder. He started, blinked a moment, and glanced at his brilliant garment. Then he rose to dignified erectness and stood a moment silent, gazing down upon us with the half-haughty, half-pitying mien of a true believer addressing heathen.

" You will excuse us," he said, in his sacerdotal voice. " It is time for our evening devotions."

He moved with the others to the further side of the room, where each of the band lighted a candle and came to place it on the altar. Then all knelt on a large mat, sank down until their hips touched their heels and, with their eyes fixed steadfastly on the serene counte-

nance of the statue, rocked their bodies back and forth to the time of a chant set up by one of the youngest priests. It was a half-monotonous wail, rising and falling in uneven cadence, lacking something of the solemnity of the chanted Latin of a Catholic office, yet more musical than the three-tone song of the Arab. One theme, often repeated, grew familiar even to our unaccustomed ears, a long-drawn refrain ending in: —

"Vooráy kalma-á-y s-ă-ă-mée,"

which the swaying group, one and all, caught up from time to time and droned in deep-voiced chorus.

The worship lasted some twenty minutes. When the American returned to us, every trace of the seaman — save the tattooing — had disappeared. He was a missionary now, fired with zeal for the "true faith"; though into his arguments crept occasionally a suggestion that his efforts were less for conversion than for self-justification. Now and again he called on his sponsor in Buddhist lore and ritual to expatiate on the doctrines he was striving to set forth. The youth needed no urging. He drew a book from the folds of his gown and, for every point brought up by the American, read us several pages of dissertations or tales of the miracles performed by the Wandering Prince.

The hour grew late for beachcombers. A dreadful fear assailed us that the night would be all sermon and no sleep. We sank into an open-eyed doze, from which we started up now and then half determined to turn Buddhists that we might be left in peace. Towards midnight the propagandists tired of their monologues and rose to their feet. The white man led the way to a back room, littered with kettles and bowls, bunches of drying rattan, and all the odds and ends of the establishment, and pointed out two mats that the servants had spread for us on the billowy, yet yielding floor of split bamboo.

"Take my tip, mate," said the Australian, as we lay down side by side, "that bloke don't swallow any more of this mess about the transmigration of souls than I do. Loafing in the shade 's his religion."

We were awakened soon after daylight by a hubbub of shrill laughter and shouts behind the bungalow. I rose and peered through a window opening. In the yard below, a score of boys, some in yellow robes, some in nothing worth mentioning, were engaged in a game that seemed too energetic to be of Oriental origin. The players were divided into two teams; but neither band was limited to any

particular part of the field, and all mingled freely together as they raced about in pursuit of what seemed at first sight to be a small basket. It was rather, as I made out when the game ceased an instant, a ball about a foot in diameter, made of open wickerwork. This the opposing contestants kicked alternately, sending it high in the air, the only rule of the game being, apparently, that it should not touch the ground nor any part of the player's body above the knees. When this was violated, the offending side lost a point.

The wiry, brown youths were remarkably nimble in following the ball, and showed great skill in returning it — no simple matter, for they could not kick it as a punter kicks a pig-skin without driving their bare toes through the openings. They struck it instead with the sides of their feet or — when it fell behind them — with their heels; yet they often kept it constantly in the air for several minutes. It was a typical Burmese scene, with more mirth and laughter than one could have heard in a whole city in the land of the morose and apathetic Hindu.

The servants brought us breakfast. Behind them entered the American priest. He squatted on the floor before us, but refused to partake, having risen to gorge himself at the first peep of dawn. Whatever its original purpose, the rule forbidding wearers of the yellow robe to eat after noonday certainly makes them early risers.

The meal over, we fished our shoes out of the tub and, promising the American to return in time for supper and "evening devotions," turned away. At the wooden bridge connecting the monastery with the world outside, we met the foraging party of novices returning from their morning rounds. Far down the street stretched a line of priests, certainly sixty in all, each holding in his embrace a huge bowl, filled to the brim with a strange assortment of native foodstuffs.

"Mate," said James, later in the morning, as we stood before a world map in the Sailors' Home, "it looks to me as if we'd bit off more 'n we can chew. There's nothing doing in the shipping line here, and not a show to earn the price of a deck passage to Singapore. And if we could, it's a thunder of a jump from there to Hong Kong."

"Aye," put in a grizzled seaman, limping forward, "ye'll be lucky lads if ye make yer get-away from Rangoon. But once ye get on the beach in Singapore, ye'll die of ould age afore iver ye see 'Ong Kong, if that's 'ow yer 'eaded. Why mates, that bloody 'ole is alive

with beachcombers that 's been 'ung up there so long they 'd not know 'ow to eat with a knife if iver they got back to God's country. Take my tip, an' give 'er a wide berth."

"It would seem foolish anyway," I remarked, addressing James, "to go to Singapore. It 's a good fifteen degrees south of here, a week of loafing around on some dirty tub to get there, and a longer jump back up north — even if we don't get stuck in the Straits."

"But what else?" objected James.

"Look how narrow the Malay Peninsula is," I went on, pointing at the map. "Bangkok is almost due east of here. We 'd save a lot of travel by going overland, and run no risk of being tied up for months in Singapore."

"But how?" demanded the Australian.

"Walk, of course."

The sailors grouped about us burst out in a roar of laughter.

"Aye, ye 'd walk across the Peninsula like ye 'd swim to Madras," chuckled one of them. "It 's bats ye have in yer belfry, from a touch o' the sun."

"But Hong Kong," I began —

"If it 's 'Ong Kong, ye 'll go to Singapore," continued the seaman, "or back the other way. There 's no man goes round the world in the north 'emisphere without touching Singapore. Put that down in yer log."

"If we walk across the Peninsula," I went on, still addressing James, "it would —"

"Yes," put in the "Askins" of the party, "it would be a unique and onconventional way of committin' suicide, original, interestin', maybe slow, but damn sure."

"Now look 'ere, lads," said the old seaman, almost tearfully, "d' ye know anything about that country? There 's no wilder savages nowhere than the Siameese. I know 'em. When I was bo's 'n on a windjammer from the Straits to China, that 's fourt — fifteen year gone, we was blowed into the bay an' put ashore fer water. We rowed by thousands o' dead babies floatin' down the river. We 'ad n 't no more 'n stepped ashore when down come a yelpin' bunch o' Siameese, with knives as long as yer arm, an' afore we could shove off they 'd killt my mate an' another 'and — chopped 'em all to pieces. Them 's the Siameese, an' the dacoits in the mountains is worse."

In short, the suggestion raised such an uproar of derision and chatter among "the boys" that we were forced to retreat to the

street to continue our planning. For all the raillery, I was still convinced that the overland trip was possible; necessary, in fact, for there was no other escape from the city. "The boys" might be right, but there was a promise of new adventures in the undertaking, and, best of all, the territory was unknown to beachcombers. For the truest satisfaction of the Wanderlust is to explore the world by virgin routes and pose as a bold pioneer in the rendezvous of the "profession" ever after.

James asserted that he was "game for anything," and, though we had no intention of quitting Rangoon for a week, we turned our attention at once to gathering information concerning the route. The task proved fruitless. Our project was branded idiotic in terms far more cutting than I had heard even in Palestine and Syria. We appealed to the American consul; we canvassed half the bungalows in the cantonment and every European office in the city; we tramped far out past the Gymkana station to the headquarters of the Geographical Society of Burma, and, surrounded by excited bands of native clerks, pored over great maps and folios ten feet square. All to no purpose. The original charts showed only wavy, brown lines through the heart of the Peninsula; and not a resident of Rangoon, apparently, had the slightest knowledge of the territory ten miles east of the city.

Our inquiries ended, as we had dreaded, by attracting the attention of the police. Late in the afternoon, while we were lounging in the Home, an Englishman in khaki burst in upon us.

"Are you the chaps," he began, "who are talking of starting for Bangkok on foot?"

"We 've been asking the way," I admitted.

"Well, save yourselves the trouble," returned the officer. "There *is* no way. The trip can't be made. You 'd be killed sure, and your governments would come back at us for letting you go. I have orders from the chief of police that you are not to leave Rangoon except by sea, and I have warned the patrolmen on the eastern side of the city to head you off. Thought I 'd tell you."

"Thanks," said James, "but we 'll hold down Rangoon for a while yet anyway."

"Yes, I know," laughed the Englishman. "So the government is going to give you a guide to show you the sights. Come in, Pearson!"

"Pearson" entered, grinning. He was a sharp-eyed Eurasian in uniform, gaunt of face and long of limb. The Englishman took his

leave and the half-breed sat down beside us. When we left the Home he followed us to the monastery. When we slipped on our shoes next morning, he was waiting for us at the foot of the steps. He was a pleasant companion and his stories were well told; but we could no more shake him off than we could find work in Rangoon. For three days he camped relentlessly on our trail.

"Look here, James," I protested, as we were breakfasting on Monday morning, "the longer we hang around Rangoon, the closer we 'll be watched. If ever we get away, it must be now, before they think we 're going."

"But Pearson —" began James.

"There 's one scheme that always works with Eurasians," I answered.

The Australian raised his eyebrows.

"Firewater," I murmured.

"Swell," grinned James.

We put the plan into execution at once, halting at the first arrack-shop beyond the monastery to show the detective our appreciation of his services. By eight bells he was the most jovial man in Rangoon; by noon he felt in duty bound to slap on the back every European we encountered. Luckily, good cheer sells cheaply in Burma, or the project would have made a serious inroad on our fortune of seven rupees.

We halted, well on in the afternoon, at an eating house hard by the Chinese temple. The Eurasian, alleging lack of appetite, ignored the plate of food that was set before him.

"See here, Pearson," I suggested, "you 've been sticking close to us for a long time. The government should be proud of you. But I should think, after three days, you 'd like to get a glimpse of your wife and the kids."

"Yesh, yesh," cried the half-breed, starting up with a whoop, "I 'm close to 'ome 'ere. I 'll run round a minute. Don't mind, old fel, eh? I 'll be back fore you 're 'alf through," and he stumbled off up the street.

Once he was out of sight, we left our dinner unfinished, and hurried back to the Home. The manager was sleeping. We laid hold on the knapsack that we had left in his keeping and struck off through the crowded native town.

"This is no good," protested James. "All the streets leading east are guarded."

"The railroad to Mandalay is n't," I replied. "We 'll run up the line out of danger, and strike out from there."

The Australian halted at a tiny drug store, and, arousing the bare-legged clerk, purchased twenty grains of quinine. "For jungle fever," he muttered as he tucked the package away in his helmet. That was our "outfit" for a journey that might last one month or six. In the knapsack were two cotton suits and a few ragged shirts. As for weapons, we had not even a penknife.

Just beyond the drug store we turned a corner and came face to face with Rice, sauntering along in the shade of the shops as if life were a perpetual pastime, a huge native cigar stuck in a corner of his frog's mouth.

"We 're off, Chi!" cried James, hardly lessening his pace. "Want to go along?"

"Eh!" gasped our former partner, "Hit the trail? An' the rains comin' on? Not on yer tintype. Ye 're bughouse to quit this burg. The graft is swell, an' I see yer finish in the jungle."

"Well, so long," we called, over our shoulders.

A mile from the Home we entered a small suburban station. The native policeman strutting up and down the platform eyed us curiously, but offered no interference. We purchased tickets to the first important town, and a few moments later were hurrying northward. James settled back in a corner of the compartment, and fell to singing in sotto voce:—

"On the road to Mandalay,
"Where the flying fishes play—"

About us lay low, rolling hills, deep green with tropical vegetation. Behind, scintillated the golden shaft of the Shwe Dagón pagoda, growing smaller and smaller, until the night, descending swiftly, blotted it out. We fell asleep, and, awakening as the train pulled into Pegu, took possession of two wicker chairs in the waiting-room. A babu, sent to rout us out, murmured an apology when he had noted the color of our skins, and stole quietly away.

Dawn found us already astir. A fruit-seller in the bazaars, given to early rising, served us breakfast and we were off; not, however, until the sun, peering boldly over the horizon, showed us the way, for we had no other guide to follow.

A sandy highway, placarded the "Toungoo Road," led forth from the village, skirting the golden pagoda of Pegu, a rival of the Shwe

Dagón; but soon swung northward, and we struck across an untracked plain. Far away to the eastward a deep blue range of rugged hills, forerunners of the wild mountain chains of the peninsula, bounded the horizon; but about us lay a flat, monotonous stretch of sandy lowlands, embellished neither by habitation nor inhabitant.

Ten miles of plodding, with never a mud hole in which to quench our thirst, brought us to a teeming bamboo village hidden away in a tangled grove. When we had driven off a canine multitude and drunk our fill, we should have gone on had not a babu pushed his way through the gaping, beclouted throng and invited us to his bungalow. He was an employé of a projected railway line from Pegu to Moulmein, even then under construction, that was to bring him, on the day of its completion, the coveted title of station-master. In anticipation of that honor he had already donned a brilliant uniform of his own designing, the sight of which filled his fellow townsmen with unutterable awe.

We squatted with him on the floor of his open hut and dispatched a dinner of rice, fruit, and bread-cakes — and red ants; no Burmese lunch would be complete without the latter. When we offered payment for the meal, the babu rose up chattering with indignation and would not be reconciled until we had patted him on the back and hidden our puerile fortune from view.

Railways are strictly handmade in Burma. Within hail of the village appeared the first mound of earth, its summit some feet above the high-water mark of flood time; and a few miles beyond we came upon a construction gang at work. There were neither steam cranes, "slips," nor "wheelers" to scoop up the earth of the paddy-fields. Of the band, full three hundred strong, a few toiled with shovels in the shallow trenches; the others swarmed up the embankment in endless file, carrying flat baskets of earth on their heads. They were Hindus, one and all, of both sexes; for the Burman scorns coolie labor. The workers toiled steadily, mechanically, though ever at a snail's pace, and the basketfuls fell too rapidly to be counted. But many thousands raised the mound only an inch higher; and, where the grading had but begun, one day's labor did not suffice to cover the short grass.

Beyond, were other gangs and between them deserted trenches and sections of embankment. The dyke was not continuous. The company sub-let the grading by the cubic yard to dozens of Hindu contractors, each of whom, having staked out some ten rods along the right of

way, threw up a ridge of the required height and moved on with his band to the head of the line. Their trenches were sharp-cornered, flat-bottomed, and contained little pagoda-shaped mounds of earth with a tuft of grass on top, by which the depth could be estimated.

Early in the afternoon we came upon a small, sluggish stream, beyond which stood a two-story bungalow of unusual magnificence for this corner of the world. A rope was stretched from shore to shore, and the primitive ferry to which it was attached was tied up at the western bank. We boarded the raft and had all but pulled ourselves across when a greeting in our own tongue drew our attention to the bungalow. On the veranda stood an Englishman, bareheaded and smiling.

James sprang hastily ashore, leaving me to bring up the rear — and the knapsack; but at the top of the bank he stopped suddenly and grasped me by the arm.

"Holy dingoes!" he gasped. "Do my eyes deceive me? I'm a Hottentot if it is n't a white woman!"

It was, sure enough. Beside the Englishman stood a youthful memsahib, in snow-white gown. A millinery shop could not have looked more out of place in these blistered paddy fields of the Irawaddy delta.

"Trouble you for a drink of water?" I panted, halting in the shade of the bungalow, which, like all dwellings in this region, stood some eight feet above the ground, on bamboo stilts.

"A drink of water!" cried the lady, smiling down upon us. "Do you think we see white men so often that we let them go as easily as that? Come up here at once."

"We 're just sitting down to lunch," said the man. "I had covers laid for you as soon as you hove in sight."

"Thanks," I answered, "we had lunch three hours ago."

"Great Cæsar! Where?" gasped the Englishman.

"In a bamboo vil—"

"What! Native stuff?" he cried, while the lady shuddered, "With red ants, eh? Well, then, you 've been famished for an hour and a half."

We could not deny it, so we mounted to the veranda.

"Put your luggage in the corner," said the Englishman. "Do you prefer lemonade or seltzer?"

I dropped the bedraggled knapsack on the top step and followed

my companion inside. In our vagabond garb, covered from crown to toe with the dust of the route, the perspiration drawing fantastic arabesques in the grime on our cheeks, we felt strangely out of place in the daintily-furnished bungalow. But our hosts would not hear our excuses. When our thirst had been quenched, we followed the Englishman to the bathroom to plunge our heads and arms into great bowls of cold water and, greatly refreshed, took our places at the table.

The Burmese cook who slipped noiselessly in and out of the room was a magician, surely, else how could he have prepared in this outpost of civilization such a dinner as he served us — even without red ants? If conversation lagged, it was chiefly the Australian's fault. His remarks were ragged and brief; for, as he admitted later in the day: "It's so bloody long since I've talked to a white man that I was afraid of making a break every time I opened my mouth."

The Englishman was superintendent of construction for the western half of the line. He had been over the route to Moulmein on horseback, and though he had never known a white man to attempt the journey on foot, he saw no reason why we could not make it if we could endure native "chow" and the tropical sun. But he scoffed at the suggestion that any living mortal could tramp from Moulmein to Bangkok, and advised us to give up at once so foolhardy a venture, and to return to Rangoon as we had come. We would not, and he mapped out on the table-cloth the route to the frontier town, pricking off each village with the point of his fork. When we declined the invitation to spend the night in his bungalow, even his wife joined him in vociferous protest. But we pleaded haste, and took our leave with their best wishes.

"If you can walk fast enough to reach Sittang to-night," came the parting word, "you will find a division engineer who will be delighted to see you. That is, if you can get across the river."

"It's Sittang or bust," said James, as we took up the pace of a forced march.

Nightfall found us still plodding on in jungled solitude. It was long afterwards that we were brought to a sudden halt at the bank of the Sittang river. Under the moon's rays, the broad expanse of water showed dark and turbulent, racing by with the swiftness of a mountain stream. The few lights that twinkled high up above the opposite shore were nearly a half-mile distant — too far to swim in

that rushing flood even had we had no knapsack to think of. I tore myself free from the undergrowth and, making a trumpet of my hands, bellowed across the water.

For a time only the echo answered. Then a faint cry was borne to our ears, and we caught the Hindustanee words "Quam hai?" (Who is it?). I took deep breath and shouted into the night:—

"Dö sahib hai! Engineer sampan, key sampan kéyderah?"

A moment of silence and the answer came back, soft yet distinct, like a near-by whisper:—

"Achá, sahib." (All right.) Even at that distance we recognized the deferential tone of the Hindu coolie.

A speck of light descended to the level of the river, and, rising and falling irregularly, came steadily nearer. We waited eagerly, yet a half-hour passed before there appeared a flat-bottomed sampan, manned by three struggling Aryans whose brown skins gleamed in the light of a flickering lantern. They took for granted that we were railway officials, and, while two wound their arms around the bushes, the third sprang ashore with a respectful greeting and, picking up our knapsack, dropped into the craft behind us.

With a shout the others let go of the bushes and the three grasped their oars and pulled with a will. The racing current carried us far down the river, but we swung at last into the more sluggish water under the lee of a bluff, and, creeping slowly up stream, gained the landing stage. A boatman stepped out with our bundle, and, zigzagging up the face of the cliff, dropped the bag on the veranda of a bungalow at the summit, shouted a "sahib hai," and fled into the night.

The Englishman who flung open the door with a bellow of delight was a boisterous, whole-hearted giant of a far different type from our noonday host; a soldier of fortune who had "mixed" in every activity from railway building to revolutions in three continents, and whose geographical information was far more extensive than that to be found in a Rand-McNally atlas. His bungalow was a palace in the wilderness; he confided that he drew his salary to spend, and that he paid four rupees a pound for Danish butter without a pang of regret. The light of his household, however, was his Eurasian wife, the most entrancing personification of loveliness that I have been privileged to run across in my wanderings. The rough life of the jungle seemed only to have made her more daintily feminine. One would have taken his oath that she had just budded into womanhood, even in face of the four sons that rolled about the bungalow;

plump-cheeked, robust little tots, with enough native blood in their veins to thrive in a land where children of white parents waste away to apathetic invalids.

We slept on the veranda high above the river, and, in spite of the thirty-two miles in our legs and the fever that fell upon James during the night, rose with the dawn, eager to be off. As we took our leave, the engineer held out to us a handful of rupees.

"Just to buy your chow on the way, lads," he smiled.

"No! no!" protested James, edging away. "We've bled you enough already."

"Tommy rot!" cried the adventurer, "Don't be an ass. We've all been in the same boat and I'm only paying back a little of what's fallen to me."

When we still refused, he called us cranks and no true soldiers of fortune, and took leave of us at the edge of the veranda.

Sittang was a mere bamboo village with a few grass-grown streets that faded away in the encircling wilderness. In spite of explicit directions from the engineer, we lost the path and plunged on for hours almost at random through a tropical forest. Noonday had passed before we broke out upon an open plain where the railway embankment began anew, and satiated our screaming thirst with cocoanut milk in the hut of a babu contractor.

Beyond, walking was less difficult. The rampant jungle had been laid open for the projected line; and, when the tangle of vegetation pressed upon us, we had only to climb to the top of the broken dyke and plod on. The country was not the unpeopled waste of the day before. Where bananas and cocoanuts and jack-fruits grow, there are human beings to eat them, and now and then a howling of dogs drew our attention to a cluster of squalid huts tucked away in a productive grove. Every few miles were gangs of coolies who fell to chattering excitedly when we came in view, and, dropping shovels and baskets, squatted on their heels, staring until we had passed, nor heeding the frenzied screaming of high-caste "straw-bosses." Substantial bungalows for advancing engineers were building on commanding eminences along the way. The carpenters were Chinamen, slow workmen when judged by Western standards, but evincing far more energy than native or Hindu.

The migratory Mongul, rare in India, unknown in Asia Minor, has invaded all the land of Burma. Few indeed are the villages to which at least one wearer of the pig-tail has not found his way and made

himself a force in the community. His household commonly consists of a Burmese wife and a troop of half-breed children; and it is whispered that the native women are by no means loath to mate with these aliens, who often prove more tolerant and provident husbands than the Burmen.

Those Celestial residents with whom we came in contact were shrewd, grasping fellows, far different from the gay and prodigal native merchants. The pair in whose shop we stifled an overgrown hunger, well on in the afternoon, received us coldly and served us in moody silence. Their stock in trade was exclusively canned goods among which American labels were not lacking. Their prices, too, were reminiscent of the Western world. When we had paid them what we knew was a just amount, they hung on our heels for a half-mile, screaming angrily and clawing at our tattered garments.

Where the western section of the embankment ended began a more open country, with many a sluggish stream to be forded. We were already knee-deep in the first of these when there sounded close at hand a snort like the blowing of a whale. I glanced in alarm at the rushes about us. From the muddy water protruded a dozen ugly, black snouts.

"Crocodiles!" screamed James, turning tail and splashing by me. "Beat it!"

"But hold on!" I cried, before we had regained the bank, "These things seem to have horns."

The creatures that had startled us were harmless water buffaloes, which, being released from their day's labor, had sought relief in the muddy stream from flies and the blazing sun.

As the day was dying, we entered a jungle city, named Kaikto, and jeopardized the honor in which sahibs are held in that metropolis of the delta by accepting a "shake-down" in the police barracks. From there the route turned southward, and the blazing sun beat in our faces during all the third day's tramp. Villages became more numerous, more thickly populated, and the jungle was broken here and there by thirsty paddy-fields.

When twilight fell, however, we were tramping along the railway dyke between two dense and apparently unpeopled forests. The signs portended a night out of doors, and we were already resigned to that fate when we came upon a path leading from the foot of the embankment across the narrow ridge between two excavations. Hoping to find some thatch shelter left by the construction gangs, we turned

aside and stumbled down the bank. The trail wound away through the jungle and brought us, a mile from the line, to a grassy clearing, in the center of which stood a capacious *dak bungalow.*

Public rest-houses of this sort are maintained by the government of British-India, where no other accommodations offer, for the housing of itinerant sahibs. They are equipped with rough sleeping quarters for a few guests, rougher bathing facilities, a few reclining chairs, and a babu keeper to register travelers and entertain them with his wisdom; for all of which a uniform charge of one rupee a day is made. There is, besides, a force of native servants at the beck and call of those who would pay more. A punkah-wallah will keep the velvet fans in motion all through the night for a few coppers; the *chowkee dar* or Hindu cook will prepare a " European " meal on more or less short notice.

But the bungalow that we had chanced upon in this Burmese wilderness was apparently deserted. We mounted the steps and, settling ourselves in veranda chairs, lighted our pipes and stretched our weary legs. We might have fallen asleep where we were, listening to the humming of the tropical night, had we not been hungry and choking with thirst.

The bungalow stood wide open, like every house in British-India. I rose and wandered through the building, lighting my way with matches and peering into every corner for a water bottle or a sleeping servant. In each of the two bedrooms there were two canvas charpoys; in the main room a table littered with tattered books and magazine leaves in English; in the back chamber several pots and kettles. There was water in abundance, a tubful of it in the lattice-work closet opening off from one of the bedrooms. But who could say how many travel-stained sahibs had bathed in it?

I returned to the veranda, and we took to shouting our wants into the jungle. Only the jungle replied, and we descended the steps for a circuit of the building, less in the hope of encountering anyone than to escape the temptation of the bathtub. Behind the bungalow stood three ragged huts. The first was empty. In the second, we found a snoring Hindu, stretched on his back on the dirt floor, close to a dying fire of fagots.

We awoke him quickly. He sprang to his feet with a frightened " achá, sahib, pawnee hai," and ran to fetch a chettie of water, not because we had asked for it, but because he knew the first requirement of travelers in the tropics.

"Now we would eat, oh, chowkee dar," said James, in Hindustanee, "julty karow."

"Achá, sahib," repeated the cook. He tossed a few fagots on the fire, set a kettle over them, emptied into it the contents of another chettie, and, catching up a blazing stick, trotted with a loose-kneed wabble to the third hut. There sounded one long-drawn squawk, a muffled cackling of hens, and the Hindu returned, holding a chicken by the head and swinging it round and round as he ran. Catching up a knife, he slashed the fowl from throat to tail, snatched off skin and feathers with a few dexterous jerks, and less than three minutes after his awakening, our supper was cooking. Truly, the serving of sahibs had imbued him with an unoriental energy.

We returned to the veranda, followed by the chokee dar, who lighted a decrepit lamp on the table within and trotted away into the jungle. He came back at the heels of a native in multicolored garb of startling brilliancy, who introduced himself as the custodian, and, squatting on his haunches in a veranda chair, took up his duties as entertainer of guests. There was not another that spoke English within a day's journey, he assured us, swelling with pride; and for that we were duly thankful. Long after the cook had carried away the plates and the chicken bones, the babu chattered on, drawing upon an apparently unlimited fund of misinformation, and jumping, as each topic was exhausted, to a totally irrelevant one, without a pause either for breath or ideas. Fortunately, he had arrived with the notion that we were surveyors of the new line, and we took good care not to undeceive him; for railway officials were entitled to the accommodations of dak bungalows without payment of the government fee. We still had a few coppers left, therefore, when the cook had been satisfied, and, driving off the inexhaustible keeper, we rolled our jackets and shoes into two "beachcomber's pillows" and turned in.

We slept an hour or two, perhaps, during the night. Of all the hardships that befall the wayfarer in British-India, none grows more unendurable than this — to be kept awake when he most needs sleep. Either his resting place — to call it a bed would be worse than inaccurate — is too hard, or the heat so sultry that the perspiration trickles along his ribs, tickling him into wakefulness. If a band of natives is not chattering under his windows, a fellow roadster snoring beside him, or a flock of roosters greeting every newborn star, there are a dozen lizards at least to make the night miserable.

The dak bungalow in the wilderness housed a whole army of these

pests; great, green-eyed reptiles from six inches to a foot long. Barely was the lamp extinguished, when one in the ceiling struck up his refrain, another on the wall beside me joined in, two more in a corner gave answering cry, and the night concert was on: —

"She-kak! she-kak! she-kak!"

Don't fancy for a moment that the cry of the Indian lizard is the half-audible murmur of the cricket or the tree toad. It sounds much more like the squawking of an ungreased bullock-cart: —

"She-kak! she-kak! she-kak!"

To attempt to drive them off was worse than useless. The walls and ceiling, being of thatch, offered more hiding places for creeping things than a hay stack. When I fired a shoe at the nearest, a shower of branches and rubbish rattled to the floor; and, after a moment of silence, the song began again, louder than before. Either the creatures were clever dodgers or invulnerable, and there was always the danger that a swiftly-thrown missile might bring down half the thatch partition: —

"She-kak! she-kak! she-kak!"

Wherever there are dwellings in British-India, there are croaking lizards. I have listened to their shriek from Tuticorin to Delhi; I have seen them darting across the carpeted floor in the bungalows of commissioner sahibs; I have awakened many a time to find one dragging his clammy way across my face. But nowhere are they more numerous nor more brazen-voiced than in the jungles of the Malay Peninsula. There came a day when we were glad that they had not been exterminated — but of that later.

Early the next morning we fell into a passable roadway that led us every half-hour through a grinning village, between which were many isolated huts. We stopped at all of them for water. The natives showed us marked kindness, often awaiting us, chettie in hand, or running out into the highway at our shout of "yee sheedela?" This Burmese word for water (yee) gave James a great deal of innocent amusement. Ever and anon he paused before a hut, to drawl, in the voice of a court crier: —"Hear ye! hear ye! hear ye! We 're thirsty as Hottentots!" Householders young and old understood. At least they fetched us water in abundance.

The fourth day afoot brought two misfortunes. The rainy season, long delayed, burst upon us in pent-up fury not an hour after we had

spent our last copper for breakfast. Where dinner would come from we could not surmise, but "on the road" one does not waste his energies in worry. Something would "turn up." It is in wandering aimlessly about the streets of a great city in the midst of plenty that the penniless outcast feels the inexorable hand of fate at his throat — not on the open road among the fields and flowers and waving palm trees.

The first shower came almost without warning; one sullen roar of thunder, the heavens opened, and the water poured. Thereafter they were frequent. At times some hut gave us shelter; more often we could only plod on in the blinding torrent that, in the twinkle of an eye, drenched us to the skin. The storms were rarely of five minutes' duration. With the last dull growl of thunder, the sun burst out more calorific than before, sopping up the pools in the highway as with a gigantic sponge, and drying our dripping garments before we had time to grumble at the wetting. Amid the extravagant beauties of the tropical landscape the vagaries of the season were so quickly forgotten that the next downpour took us as completely by surprise as though it had been the first of the season.

During the morning we met a funeral procession en route for the place of cremation. Wailing and mourning there were none. Why should death bring grief to the survivors when the deceased has merely lost one of his innumerable lives? There came first of all dozens of girls dressed as for a yearly festival. About their necks were garlands of flowers; in their jet-black hair, red and white blossoms. Each carried a flat basket, heaped high with offerings that made us envious of him who had been gathered to his fathers. Here one bore bananas of brightest yellow; another, golden mangoes; a third, great, plump pineapples. The girls held the baskets high above their heads, swaying their bodies from side to side and tripping lightly back and forth across the road as they advanced, the long cortége executing such a snake-dance as one sees on a college gridiron after a great contest. The chant that rose and fell in time with their movements sounded less a dirge than a pean of victory; now and again a singer broke out in merry laughter. The coffin was a wooden box, gayly decked with flowers and trinkets, and three of the eight men who bore it on their shoulders were puffing at long native cigars. Behind them more men, led by two saffron-clad priests, pattered through the dust, chattering like school girls, yet adding their discordant voices now and then to the cadenced chorus of the females.

The sun was blazing directly overhead, leaving our pudgy shadows to be trampled under foot, when we heard behind us a faint wail of "sahib! sahib." Far down the green-framed roadway trotted a beclouted brown man, waving his arms above his head. We were already fifteen miles distant from the dak bungalow; small wonder if we were surprised to find our pursuer none other than that chowkee dar who had skinned our chicken so deftly the night before. A misgiving fell upon us. No doubt the fellow had found out that we were no railway officials after all, and had come to demand the bungalow fee of two rupees. We stepped into the shade and awaited anxiously the brown-skinned nemesis.

But there was no cause for alarm. Amid his chattering the night before, the babu custodian had forgotten his first duty — to register us. When his error came to light, we were gone; and he had sent the cook to get our names. That was all; and for that the Hindu had run the entire fifteen miles. When we had scribbled our names on the limp, wet rag of paper he carried in his hand, he turned aside from the road and threw himself face down in the edge of the forest.

The beauties of the landscape impressed themselves less and less upon us with every mile thereafter. Not that our surroundings had lost anything of their charm, the scenery was rather more striking; but the dinner hour had passed and our bellies had begun to pinch us. The Burmese, we had been told, were charitable to a fault. But what use to "batter" back doors, when we knew barely a dozen words of the native tongue? Here and there a bunch of bananas hung at the top of its stocky tree, but the fruit was hopelessly green; cocoanuts there were in abundance, but they supplied drink rather than food. Still hunger grew apace. The only alternative to starving left us was to exploit the shopkeepers,— to eat our fill and run away.

We chose a well-stocked booth in a teeming village, and, advancing with a millionaire swagger, sat down on the bamboo floor and called for food. The merchant and his family were enjoying a plenteous repast. The wife grinned cheerily upon us for the honor we had done her among all her neighbors, and brought us a bowl of rice and a strange vegetable currie. While we ate, the unsuspecting victims squatted around us, shrieking in our ears as though they would force us to understand by endless repetitions and lusty bellowing. When we addressed them in English, they cried "nămelay-voo," and took deeper breath. When we spoke in Hindustanee, they grinned sympathetically and again bellowed "nămelay-voo." How often I

had heard those words since our departure from Rangoon! At first, I had fancied the speaker was attempting to converse in French. It was easy to imagine that he was trying to say "what is your name?" But he was not, for when I answered in the language of Voltaire, the refrain came back louder than before:—"Năme lay-voo?"

We did not eat our fill at the first shop. To have done so would have been to leave the keeper a pauper. When our hunger had been somewhat allayed, we rose to our feet.

"I 'm sorry to work this phony game on you, old girl," said James, "but I know you could n't cash a check—"

"Năme lay-voo?" cried the personage thus disrespectfully addressed, and the family smile broadened and spread to the family ears. We caught up the knapsack and walked rapidly away; for well we knew the agonized screams that would greet our perfidy and the menacing mob that would gather at our heels. Four steps we had taken, and still no outcry. We hurried on, not daring to look back. Suddenly a roar of laughter sounded behind us. I glanced over my shoulder. Not a man pursued us. The family still squatted on the bamboo floor of the booth, doubled up and shaking with mirth.

We levied on the shopkeepers whenever hunger assailed us thereafter, though never eating more than two or three cents' worth at any one stall. Never a merchant showed anger at our rascality. So excellent a joke did our ruse seem to the natives that laughter rang out behind us at every sortie. Nay, many a shopkeeper called us back and forced upon us handfuls of the best fruit in his meager little stock, guffawing the while until the tears ran down his cheeks, and calling his neighbors about him to tell them the jest, that they might laugh with him. And they did. More than once we left an entire village shaking its sides at the trick which the two witty sahibs had played upon it.

When night came on we appropriated lodgings in the same high-handed fashion, stretching out on the veranda of the most pretentious shop in a long, straggling village. Unfortunately, the wretch who kept it was no true Burman. A dozen times he came out to growl at us, and to answer our questions with an angry "năme lay-voo." Darkness fell swiftly. It was the hour of closing. The merchant began to drag out boards from under his shanty and to stand them up endwise across the open front of the shop, fitting them into grooves at top and bottom. When only a narrow opening was left, he turned upon us with a snarl and motioned to us to be off. We paid no heed,

for so fierce an evening storm had begun that the shop lamp lighted up an unbroken sheet of water at the edge of the veranda. The shopkeeper blustered and howled to make his voice heard above the rumble of the torrent, waving his arms wildly above his head. We stretched our aching legs and let him rage on. He fell silent at last and squatted disconsolately in the opening. He could have put up the last board and left us outside, but that would have been to disobey the ancient Buddhist law of hospitality.

A half-hour had passed when he sprang up suddenly with a grunt of satisfaction and stepped into his dwelling. When he came out he carried a lantern and wore a black, waterproof sheet that hid all but a narrow strip of his face and his bare feet. Bellowing in our ears, he began a pantomime that we understood to be an offer to lead us to some other shelter.

"Let's risk it," said James. "This is no downy couch, and he's probably going to take us to a Buddhist monastery. If he tries any tricks we'll stick to him and come back."

We stepped into the deluge and followed the native along the highway in the direction we had come. The storm increased. It was not a mere matter of getting wet. There was not a dry thread on us when we had taken four steps. But the torrent, falling on our bowed backs, weighed us down like a mighty burden, a sensation one may experience under an especially strong shower bath.

Mile after mile the native trotted on; it seemed at least ten, certainly it was three. The mud, oozing into our dilapidated shoes during the day, had blistered our feet to the ankles; our legs creaked with every step. The Australian fell behind. I stumbled over a knoll and sprawled into a river of mud that spattered even into my eyes. A bellow brought the Burman to a halt. I splashed forward and grasped him by a wrist.

"Hold him!" howled James from the rear. "The bloody ass will take us clear back to Pegu. There's a house down there. Let's try it."

We skated down the slippery slope, dragging the shopkeeper after us, and stumbled across the veranda into a low, rambling hovel of a single room. At one end squatted a half-dozen low-caste men and as many slatternly, half-naked females. In a corner was spread an array of food stuffs; in another, several dirty, brown brats were curled up on a heap of rush mats and foul rags. James sprang through the squatting group and fell upon the wares.

"Only grains and vegetables," he wailed. "Not a damn thing a civilized man's dog could eat unless it was cooked. It's no supper for us, all right. What say we turn in?"

He dived towards the other corner and tumbled the sleeping children together. The natives stared stupidly, offering no sign of protest at this maltreatment of their offspring. The Australian threw himself down beside the slumberers.

"Holy dingoes!" he gasped, bounding again to his feet, "What a smell!"

We had indeed fallen upon squalor unusual in the land of Burma.

Our guide, waiving the rights of higher caste, squatted with the others. Then he began to chatter, and, that accomplishment being universal among his countrymen, he was soon joined by all the group; the old men first, in rasping undertones, then the younger males, in deeper voice, and last, the females, in cracked treble.

We sat down dejectedly on two Standard Oil cans. For an hour the natives jabbered on, gaping at us, chewing their betel-nut cuds like ruminating animals. Green-eyed lizards in wall and ceiling set up their nerve-racking "she-kak! she-kak!" The mud dried in thick layers on our faces.

Suddenly James bounded into the midst of the group and grasped the shopkeeper by the folds of his loose gown.

"We want something to eat!" he bellowed. "If there's any chow in this shack show it up. If there isn't, cut out this tongue rattle, you missing link, and let us sleep!" and he shook the passive Burman so savagely that the cigarette hanging from his nether lip flew among the sleeping children.

The shopkeeper, showing neither surprise nor anger, regained his equilibrium, picked up his lantern, and marched with dignified tread out into the night. Apparently he had abandoned us in spite of the law of hospitality.

But he was a true disciple of Gautama, for he sauntered in, a few moments later, in company with five men in high-caste costumes.

"Any of you chaps speak English?" I cried.

The newcomers gave no sign of having understood. One, more showily dressed than his companions, sat down on a heap of rattan. The others grouped themselves about him, and a new conference began. The rain ceased. The lizards shrieked sardonically. James fell into a doze, humped together on his oil can.

Suddenly I caught, above the chatter, the word "babu."

"Look here," I interrupted, "If there's a babu here he speaks English. Who is he?"

The only reply was a sudden silence that did not last long.

"Babu," cried the shopkeeper, some moments later. This time there could be no doubt that he had addressed the silent Beau Brummel on the rattan heap.

"You speak English!" I charged, pointing an accusing finger at him. "Tell them we want something to eat."

The fellow stared stolidly. If the title belonged to him he was anxious to conceal his accomplishments.

"It's some damn sneak," burst out James, "come here to eavesdrop."

Four days in the jungle had weakened the Australian's command over his temper. Or was his speech a ruse? If so, it succeeded in its object. A flush mounted to the swarthy cheek of the native; he opened and closed his mouth several times as if he had received a heavy blow in the ribs, and spoke, slowly and distinctly:—

"I am not damn snake. I have been listening."

"Of course!" bellowed James, "I repeat, you are a sneak."

"Don't!" shuddered the babu, "Don't name me damn snake. If they know you talk me so I fall in my caste."

"Well, why didn't you answer when I spoke to you?" I demanded.

"I was listening to find out what you were wishing," stammered the Burman.

"You half-baked Hindu!" shouted James. "You heard us say a dozen times we wanted something to eat."

"But," pleaded the babu, "this is a very jungly place and we have not proper food for Europeans."

"Proper be blowed!" shrieked the Australian. "Who's talking about European food? If there's anything to eat around here trot it out. If we *have n't* got money we can pay for it. Here's a good suit of clothes —" he caught up the knapsack and tumbled his "swag" out on the floor.

"There's only native food," objected the Burman. "White men cannot —"

"What you can eat, so can we," I cried. "Take the suit and bring us something."

"Oh! We cannot take payment," protested the babu.

"Jumping Hottentots!" screamed James. "Take pay or don't, but stop your yapping and tell them we want something to *eat*."

"I shall have prepared some food which Europeans can eat," murmured the native in an oily voice. He harangued the group long and deliberately. An undressed female rose, hobbled to a corner of the room, lighted a fire of fagots, and squatted beside it. Though it was certainly midnight, we gave up all hope of expediting matters, and waited with set teeth. For a half-hour not a word was spoken. Then the female rose and strolled towards us, holding out — four slices of toast!

"If I'd known there was bread in this shack," cried James, as we snatched the slices, "there'd have been damn little toasting."

"I have worked for Europeans," said the babu proudly, yet with a touch of sadness in his voice, "and I know they cannot eat the native bread, so I have it prepared as sahibs eat it."

"We've been eating native bread for months," mumbled James, "days anyway. You're a bit crazy, I think. Got any rice?"

"There is rice and fish," said the Burman, "but can you eat that too?"

"Just watch us," said James.

The female brought a native supper, and we fell to.

"How wonderful!" murmured the babu, "And you are sahibs!"

When we acknowledged ourselves satisfied, two blankets were spread for us on the floor, the chattering visitors filed out into the night, and we stretched out side by side to listen a few hours to the croaking of irrepressible lizards.

The following noonday found us miles distant. It was our second day without a copper; yet the natives received us as kindly as if we had been men of means. The proximity of Moulmein, where sahib muscular effort might be turned to account, filled us with new hope and we splashed doggedly on.

Villages there were without number. Their tapering pagodas dominated the landscape. On the east stretched the rugged mountain chain, so near now that we could make out plainly the little shrines far up on the summit of each conspicuous peak. Tropical showers burst upon us at frequent intervals, wild deluges of water from which we occasionally found shelter under long-legged hovels. Even when we scrambled up the bamboo ladders into the dwellings, the squatting family showed no resentment at the intrusion; often they gave us fruit, once they forced upon us two native cigars. It was these that made James forever after a stout champion of the Burmese; for two days had passed since we had shared our last smoke.

Queer things are these Burmese cigars! They call them "saybullies," and they smoke them in installments; for no man lives with the endurance necessary to consume a saybully at one sitting. They are a foot long, as thick as the thumb of a wind-jammer's bo's'n, rather cigarettes than cigars; for they are wrapped in a thick, leathery paper that almost defies destruction, even by fire. In the country districts they serve as almanacs. The peasant buys his cigar on market day, puffs fiercely at it on the journey home, stows it away about his person when he is satisfied, and pulls it out from time to time to smoke again. As a result, one can easily determine the day of the week by noting the length of the saybullies one encounters along the route.

To determine the ingredients that make up this Burmese concoction is not so simple a matter. Now and then, in the smoking, one comes across pebbles and fagots and a variety of foreign substances which even a manufacturer of "two-fers" would hesitate to use. But the comparison is unjust, for the saybully *does* contain tobacco, little wads of it, tucked away among the rubbish.

Men, women, and children indulge in this form of the soothing weed. As in Ceylon, the females, and often the males, wear heavy leaden washers in their ears until the aperture is stretched to the size of a rat hole. It is a wise custom. For, having no pockets, where could the Burmese matron find place for her half-smoked saybully were she denied the privilege of thrusting it through the lobe of her ear?

Dusk was falling when we overtook a fellow pedestrian; a Eurasian youth provided with an umbrella and attended by a native servant boy. When he had gasped his astonishment at meeting two bedraggled sahibs in this strange corner of the world and volunteered a detailed autobiography, I found time to put a question over which I had been pondering for some days.

"As your mother is Burmese," I began, while we splashed on into the night, "you speak that language, of course?"

"Oh! yes," answered the Eurasian, "even better than English."

"Then you can tell us about this phrase we have heard so much. It's 'nămelay-voo.' Sounds like bum French, but I suppose it's Burmese?"

"Oh! yes, that is Burmese."

"What the deuce does it mean?"

"I don't know," replied the youth.

"Eh! But it's certainly a common expression. Every Burman

we speak to shouts 'nămelay-voo.' What are they trying to say?"

"I don't know," repeated the half-breed.

"Mighty funny, if you speak Burmese, that you don't understand that!"

"But I do understand it!" protested the youth.

"Well, what is it then?"

"I don't know. I don't understand."

"Say, what are you giving us?" cried James. "Don't you ever say 'nămelay-voo'?"

"Certainly! Very often, every day, every hour!"

"Well, what do you mean when you say it?"

"I don't understand. I don't know."

"Look here!" bellowed the Australian, "Don't you go springing any stale jokes on us. We 're not in a mood for 'em."

"Gentlemen," gasped the half-breed, with tears in his voice, "I do not joke and I am not joking. 'Nămelay-voo' is a Burmese word which has for meaning 'I don't know' or 'I don't understand!'"

It was black night when we stumbled down through the village of Martaban to the brink of the river of the same name, a swollen stream fully two miles wide where our day's journey must have ended, had we not fallen in with the Eurasian. His home was in Moulmein, and, summoning a sampan, he invited us to embark with him. The native boat was either light of material or water-logged, and the waves that broke over the craft threatened more than once to swamp us. Crocodiles, whispered our companion, swarmed at this point. Now and then an ominous grunt sounded close at hand, and the boatman peered anxiously about him as he strained wildly at his single oar against the current that would have carried us out to sea. Panting with his exertions, he fetched the opposite shore, beaching the craft on a slimy slope; and we splashed through a sea of mud to a roughly-paved street flanking the river.

"You see Moulmein is a city," said the Eurasian, proudly, pointing along the row of lighted shops, with fronts all doorway, like those of Damascus. "We have even restaurants and cabs. Will you not take supper?"

We would, and he led the way to a Mohammedan eating-house in which we were served several savory messes by an unkempt Islamite, who wiped his hands, after tossing charcoal on his fire or scooping up a plate of food, on his fez, and chewed betel-nut as he worked, spitting perilously near to the open pots. The meal over, the Eurasian called

a "cab." It was a mere box on wheels, about four feet each way, and had no seats. When we had packed ourselves inside, the driver imprisoned us by slamming the air-tight door, and we jolted away.

Fearful of calling paternal attention to his extravagance, the youth dismissed the hansom at the edge of the quarter in which he lived, and we continued on foot to his bungalow. His father was an emaciated Englishman of the rougher, half-educated type, employed in the Moulmein custom service. He greeted us somewhat coldly. When we had been duly inspected by his Burmese wife and their eighteen children, we threw ourselves down on the floor of the open veranda and, drenched and mud-caked as we were, sank into corpse-like slumber.

CHAPTER XIX

ON FOOT ACROSS THE MALAY PENINSULA

"NOW lads," said our host, as we were finishing a late breakfast the next morning, "I 'll 'ave to ask you to move on. If I was fixed right you 'd be welcome to 'ang out 'ere as long as you 're in town, but I don't draw no viceroy's salary an' I 've got a fair size family to support. Up on the 'ill there, lives an American Christer. Go up an' give 'im your yarn an' touch 'im fer a few dibs."

We did not, of course, take the advice of the Englishman. James and I were agreed that it would not be consistent with our dignity to turn to so base a use as the purchase of currie and rice the funds needed for the distribution of Bibles and tracts among the aborigines. We did call on the good padre, but for no other purpose than to crave permission to inspect his cast-off foot wear. The tramp from Pegu had wrought disaster to our own. My companion wore on his right foot the upper portion of a shoe, the sole of which he had left somewhere in the Burmese jungle; on the left, the sole of its mate, to which there still adhered enough of the upper to keep it in place. He was better shod than I.

But missionaries domiciled in the far corners of the brown man's land are not wont to be satisfied with a casual morning call from those of their own race. The "Christer" espied us as we started up the sloping pathway through his private park, and gave us American welcome at the foot of the steps. Our coming, he averred, was the red-letter event of that season. Before we had time even to broach the object of our visit, we found ourselves stammering denials to the assertion he was shouting to his wife within, that we were to stay at least a fortnight.

Our new host was a native of Indiana, a missionary among the Talaings, as the inhabitants of this region are known. His dwelling, the Talaing Mission, was a palatial bungalow set in a wooded estate on the outer rim of the city. Its windows commanded a far-reaching view over a gorgeous tropical landscape. Within, it was not merely

spacious, airy, and lighted with soft tints of filtered sunshine — blessings easily attained in British-Burma, it was hung with rich tapestries, carpeted with downy rugs, decorated with Oriental works of art. The room to which we were assigned was all but sumptuously furnished; and it was by no means the "bridal chamber." At table we were served formal dinners of many courses; a white-liveried chowkee dar slipped in and out of the room, salaaming reverentially each time he offered a new dish; a punkah-wallah on the back veranda toiled ceaselessly; a gardener clipped away at the shrubbery in the mission grounds; a native *aya* followed the two tiny memsahibs who drove about the house a team of lizards, harnessed in tandem with the reins tied to their hind legs. In short, the reverend gentleman lived in a style rarely dreamed of by men of the cloth at home, or by the sympathetic spinsters to whose charity the adjacent heathen owed their threatened evangelization.

For all his profession, however, the man from Indiana was one whose acquaintanceship was well worth the making. To us especially, for when he was once convinced that our plea for employment was genuine, he quickly found something to put us at. One would have fancied that a "handy man" had never before entered the mission grounds. There was barely a trade of which we knew the rudiments that we did not take a turn at during our stay. Having served apprenticeship in earlier days as carpenter, blacksmith, shoemaker, and "carriage trimmer," I repaired the floor and several doors and windows, constructed two kitchen benches, forged wardrobe hooks, half-soled the family shoes, and upholstered two chairs used on "state occasions." James, meanwhile, re-covered the padre's pack-saddle, overhauled and oiled his fire-arms, put new roosts in his henhouse, and set his lumber room in order. It was not that native workmen were scarce; a small army of servants flitted about the bungalow, leering at our loss of caste. But saddening experience had taught the missionary that Hindu or Burmese workmen not only made a botch of any task outside their narrow fields, but ruined with surprising rapidity the tools of which he had brought a well-stocked chest from his native land.

Our first day's labor was enlivened with tales of the horrors that would befall us if we persisted in continuing our journey; the second, with pleas for a longer sojourn; the third, with preparations for our departure. As to the route, we could learn no more than the names of three villages through which the "wild men" of the interior

passed on their way to Siam. To what section of Siam their trail might bring us no man knew.

A few hours over washtub and needle made our rags presentable, and we still had two extra cotton suits. That these and our other possessions might be protected from the tropical deluges, we bought two squares of oilcloth in which to roll our "swag." My bundle contained one of the two pairs of half-worn shoes that I had come across in the lumber-room. Unfortunately, there was a marked pedal disparity between the Australian and the missionary, and my companion might have departed as poorly shod as he had arrived, had not the good sky pilot insisted on fitting him out in the bazaars. There, the stoutest shoes in stock proved to be a pair of football buskins, imported for some Moulmein exponent of Rugby. These the purchaser chose, in the face of the protest of the prospective wearer, arguing that the cleats made them just the thing for climbing steep mountain paths. In my pack, too, were our earnings at the mission, some four dollars in silver and copper; James having pleaded that he was too careless to be intrusted with such a fortune. Nor should the parting gifts of our hosts be forgotten,— a little pocket compass from the padre, and a bottle of "Superior Curry Dressing" from his solicitous spouse.

We left the Talaing Mission, then, on the morning of May twenty-third, and, boarding a tiny steamer plying on the Gyang river, disembarked as the sun was touching the western tree-tops, in the village of Choung Doa. It comprised two rows of spindle-shanked hutches facing a narrow clearing ankle-deep in mud. In one of the booths, boiled rice, tea, and a few stale biscuits from far-off England were for sale. The population, irrespective of age, sex, or dishabille, formed a gaping circle around us and flocked behind us as we set out, like country boys in the wake of the annual circus parade.

A jungle trail that was almost a highway led eastward through densest virgin forest. We set a sharp pace, for the hour was late and the next hamlet full fifteen miles distant. Not a hut nor a human being did we pass on the journey; only the trail, winding over thick-clothed foothills, gave evidence that man had been here before us.

Black night had fallen when we reached Kawkeriek. As the capital of the most eastern district of the Indian Empire, it posed as a city of importance; yet it was only a larger collection of those same one-story, bamboo huts, ranged in unsteady rows like the soldiers of an inebriated army, in the square clearing which its inhabitants had

won by force of arms from the militant jungle. A sub-commissioner dwelt there. That much information had reached Moulmein. Perhaps he spoke a smattering of English. We fell to shouting an inquiry for his bungalow as we wandered in and out among the huts. Here and there, where a light cast a flickering gleam into the night, we startled the peace of a quiet family by intruding upon them — and seldom found them in a garb to receive callers. The few belated stragglers whom we came upon in the darkness listened with trembling limbs to our query, grunted unintelligibly, and sped noiselessly away.

It was surely nine and time all well-behaved residents of the capital should have been abed, when we captured a night-hawk on his way home after a little supper with the boys, or a round of the dance-halls. He was of bolder stuff, naturally, and better informed on who's who in Kawkeriek than his hen-pecked neighbors, and consented like a man ready for any adventure to give us guidance.

Beyond the last row of dwellings, he plunged into a sub-sylvan pathway, and, mounting a gentle slope, paused before a forest-girdled bungalow. We turned to thank him, but he had slipped silently away, anxious, no doubt, to reach his apartment before the elevator stopped running.

The commissioner was reading in his study. He was a Burman from "over Mandalay way," as much a foreigner in Kawkeriek as we, and so much a sahib in his habits that he had not yet dined. For that we were grateful. To have missed the formal repast to which he invited us would have been a misfortune indeed.

So rarely does England appoint any but a white man to rule over a district, that this native, who had risen so high in her esteem, awakened our keenest curiosity. In appearance he was like any other Burman of the prosperous class. His garb was the usual flowing robe, though his legs were dressed and his feet shod. His long, black hair, a bit wavy and of a thickness the other sex might have envied, was caught up at the back of his head in a "Psyche knot." Like the police captain of Bankipore, however, he was in all but nationality and dress a European. Without the trace of a foreign accent, he couched even his casual remarks in an English that sounded like a reading from a master of style. His energy, his accomplishments, his very point of view were those of the Occident. Had we entered the bungalow blindfolded, we should never have suspected that his skin was brown. So little of the native was there left in his make-up that, though middle-aged, he was still a bachelor.

"I have been too busy in my short life," he confided, "to give attention to such matters."

There was a dak bungalow in Kawkeriek. The commissioner's servant escorted us thither, prepared our bath, and arranged the sleeping-quarters for the reception of such distinguished guests. In the morning we took breakfast with the governor. No more important problem, apparently, than the planning of our itinerary had occupied his attention in many a day. He had summoned his entire council, six men of standing in the community, who approached the business in hand with the solemnity of delegates to a Hague conference.

The morning was half spent before the result of their deliberations was laid before us. It was tabulated under three heads. First: the country east of the capital was a trackless jungle overrun with savage dacoits, poisonous reptiles, and man-eating tigers, into which even the people of Kawkeriek dared not venture. Secondly: if we persisted in our suicidal project, would we not spend a few days of our closing existence with the commissioner, who was pining away for lack of congenial companions. Thirdly: if we denied him even this favor, there was outside his door a "wild man," chief of a jungle village, whose route coincided with our own for one day's journey.

We suggested an immediate departure. A servant stepped out on the veranda and summoned the *boh* into the council chamber. He was a "wild man" indeed. In physique, he was thin and angular, a tall man for his race, though small when judged by our standard. His skin was a leathery brown, his hair short and bristling, his eyes small and shifty, with a suggestion of the leopard in them. The chewing of betel-nut had left his teeth jet-black, and the prominence of his cheek bones under a sloping forehead made his face ugly to look upon. All in all, he was a creature who would have seemed in his proper element chattering in the tree-tops of the jungle.

His dress, nevertheless, was brilliant. Around his brow was wound a strip of pink silk; an embroidered jacket, innocent of buttons, left his chest bare to the waist-line; his loins and thighs were clothed in many yards of bright red stuff arranged in the fashion of bloomers. Below the knees he wore nothing. At his waist was fastened a betel-nut pouch. He carried a leather sack of the shape of a saddlebag, and — having fallen under the civilizing influence of Kawkeriek — an umbrella.

His dialect being a foreign language to the commissioner, the importance of his mission was impressed upon the *boh* through an inter-

preter. He replied only in monosyllables, salaaming, each time he grunted, so low that his head all but touched his knees. From time to time he sat down on his heels as a signal mark of respect. When he retired, he backed towards the door, kowtowing with every step, and forgetting, in his awe, his leather sack, until he was called back by the commissioner's major domo.

The brilliant garb which the village chieftan had donned for his audience with the governor was not, of course, his traveling costume. On the outskirts of the capital he signed to us to halt and stepped inside a hut. But for his ape's countenance we should not have recognized him when he reappeared. His regal garments had been packed away in his haversack, the broad strap of which was his only covering, save a strip of dirty, white cotton about his loins.

He plunged at once into the jungle, moving with little, mincing steps beside which our strides seemed awkward. The path was so narrow that the outstretching branches whipped us in the faces. It showed few signs of travel and was overgrown with virile creepers that entangled our feet. None but a jungle-bred human could have followed the erratic, oft-obliterated route through that labyrinth of vegetation. Flocks of birds of brilliant plumage flew away before us, uttering strident screams; now and then a crashing of underbrush marked the flight of some unknown animal. The overbearing sunshine, falling sheer upon us, seemed to double the weight of the "swag" on our shoulders; and the bundles themselves were not light.

Our guide was the most taciturn of Orientals. Not once during the day, to our knowledge, did a sound escape his lips. Where the path widened a bit, he raised his umbrella and cantered steadily forward. Even swollen streams were no obstacle to him. Had he been alone it is doubtful whether he would have noticed them at all. With never a pause he splashed through the first and loped unconcernedly on along the branch-choked path. We hallooed to him as we sat down to pull off our shoes; and he halted a moment, but set off again before we had waded ashore. When we shouted once more he turned to stare open-mouthed until we were re-shod. Why these strange creatures should wear garments on their feet under any circumstances was an enigma to him; that we should stop to put on our shoes again when we must know there were other streams to wade seemed the height of asininity. When we had overtaken him he hinted in awkward pantomime that we should do better to toss aside the foolish leather contrivances that hindered our progress. He could not realize that a

mile over sharp stones and jagged roots would have left us crippled.

As we neared the mountains the streams increased in number and swiftness. In the beginning we took it upon ourselves, as a duty to beachcombers who might some day appeal to us for statistical information, to count them. When we had forded thirty-six before the sun began its decline, we gave up the attempt in despair. By that time, too, we had grown weary of halting every hundred yards to pull off our shoes and bellow after the boh, who must be reminded at every rivulet of our peculiar custom. James essayed to cross one on a few stepping-stones, lost his balance, and sprawled headlong into it. I was more fortunate, but reached the further bank by no means dry shod. Thereafter we waded through the streams, which for the most part were something over knee-deep, and marched on with the water gushing from our shoe-tops. It mattered little in the end, for a pent-up deluge burst upon us.

He who has never bowed his back to a tropical shower at the height of the rainy season cannot know their violence; and nowhere do they rage with more fury than in the mountains of the Malay Peninsula. With a roar like the explosion of a powder-mill an infuriated clap of thunder broke above us. Then another and another, in quick, spasmodic blasts. It was no such tamed and domesticated thunder as that of the north. Flaming flashes of lightning followed each other in quick succession, half blinding us with their sudden glare. We looked instinctively to see the riotous vegetation burst into flame. In the falling masses of water — to call it rain seems absurd — we plunged on; the densest thicket could not have offered the least shelter. The boh had raised his umbrella. It broke the force of the downpour, but could not save him a drenching. What cared he, dressed only in a loin-cloth? The water ran in rivulets down his naked shoulders and along his prominent ribs, yet on his macilent face hovered the beginning of a haggard smile. Between the crashes of thunder the devil's-tattoo of the storm drowned out all other sounds. Only by speaking into my companion's ear as into a telephone receiver, and bellowing at the top of my lungs, could I make myself heard.

Then the storm abated — gradually at first, then suddenly, and with its ceasing our tones were still shrill and strident. Quickly the sun burst forth again, to blaze fiercely upon us; though not for long. All that day the deluges broke in succession so rapid that we had no notion of their number. More often than not they caught us climbing a sheer mountain-side by a narrow, clay-bottomed path down which an

ever-increasing brook poured, washing us off our feet while we clutched at the overhanging bushes.

The boh led us, by zigzag routes, over two mountain ranges before the day was done. At sunset, we were descending into a third valley when we came suddenly upon a tiny clearing and a tinier village. "Thenganyenam" the natives called it. There were four bamboo huts and a dak bungalow, housing a population of thirty-one "wild men" and one tame one. To take the census was no difficult matter, for the inhabitants poured forth from their hovels before we had crossed five yards of the clearing.

At their head trotted the domesticated human. In all the shrieking, gaping band of men, women, and children there was no other that wore more than a loin-cloth or an abbreviated shirt. He was a babu, the "manager" of the public rest-house. With a majestic bow of deepest reverence he offered us welcome, turned to wave back the awe-stricken populace with the gesture of a man born to command, and led the way with martial stride to the government bungalow.

"Look here, babu," I began, as we sank down into wicker chairs on the veranda, "this is a splendid little surprise to find a dak bungalow and a man who speaks English, here in the jungle. But we're no millionaires; and the government fee is two rupees, eh? Too strong for us. Can't you get us a cheaper lodging in one of the huts?"

"The government," returned the babu, with careful enunciation, "the government have make the dak bungalow for Europeans. Why; you may not ask me. In two years and nine days that I am living in Thenganyenam there are come two white men, and one have only rested and not sleep. But because the dak bungalow is make, all sahibs coming in Thenganyenam must stop in it. When I have see you coming by the foot and not by the horses I must know that you have not plenty money. Every day we are not everybody rich. How strong you have the legs to come from Kawkeriek by the foot! The two rupees you must not pay. If you can give some little to the cook, that he make you a supper—"

"That's the word," burst out James. "Sure, we pay for our chow. Where's the chowkee? Tell him to get busy."

"But," apologized the babu, "this is a very jungly place and we have not proper food for Europeans."

"Holy dingoes!" shrieked the Australian. "Do I hear that old, stale joke again? Bring a pan of rice, or a raw turnip, or a fried snake, anything, only julty karow. That wobbly-legged boh scoffed

all his sandwiches without saying ' How d 'ye do,' and that breakfast in Kawky did n 't last an hour. Ring up the chowkee."

" The other day," observed the babu, reminiscently, " there was a chicken in Thenganyenam. I shall send the cook to hunt him."

Through the united efforts of the Thenganyenamians, the solitary fowl was run to earth, with more hubbub than dispatch, and sacrificed in sight of the assembled multitude. A delay that was both painful and unaccountable ensued before it appeared before us as tongue-scorching currie, in an ample setting of hard-boiled rice.

Meanwhile we had pulled off our water-soaked rags, rubbed down with a strip of canvas, and donned our extra garments. The change was most gratifying. It was not until then that we realized the full value of the squares of oil-cloth that had kept our " swag " dry. Supper over, we drove the babu forth into the night and turned in on the canvas charpoys.

The swamps and streams through which we had plunged during the day had swarmed with leeches. One of these, having imbedded itself in a vein of my right ankle, refused to be dislodged. At supper a tiny stream of blood had trickled along my toes; but, fancying the flow would cease of itself, I made no efforts to staunch it. I awoke in the morning with the sensation of being held captive. The blood, oozing out during the night, had congealed, gluing my right leg to the canvas of the charpoy.

Before I had dressed, the Hindu cook and care-taker wandered into the room; and, catching sight of the long, red stain, gave one lusty shriek, and tumbled out on the veranda. James, who had slept in an adjoining chamber, was awakened by the bellow, and, hearing the Hindustanee word for " blood," sprang to his feet with the conviction that I had been assassinated as he slept. I was explaining the matter to him when the cook returned, wild of eye, and bearing the register in which we had inscribed our names the evening before. Waving his free arm now at the book, now at the charpoy, he danced about us screaming excitedly. Comprehending little of his voluble chatter, we waved him off and stepped out upon the veranda. The " manager " was just mounting the steps.

" Here, babu," demanded James, " what 's biting our friend from the kitchen? "

The Hindu turned to his superior, all but choking himself over his convulsive utterance. Tears were streaming down his tawny cheeks.

"He says," cried the babu, when the cook fell silent at last, "in the charpoy is much blood. Have you become wounded?"

"It was only a blood-sucker," I explained, "but where does the register come in?"

"The cook asks that you will write all the story of the blood in it, very careful."

"What nonsense," I answered, when James' mirth had subsided. "I 'll pay for the damage to the charpoy."

"Oh! It is no dam-mage," protested the babu, "no dam-mage at all. He is not ask for pay. But when the inspector is coming and seeing the much blood in the charpoy, he is thinking the cook have kill a man who have sleep here, and he is taking him to Kawkeriek and making him shot. Very bad. So cook cry. Please, sir, write you the story in the register book."

I sat down at the veranda table and inscribed a dramatic tale for the visiting inspector. Only when I had filled the page below our names and half the next one, did the Hindu acknowledge himself contented, and carry away the book for safe keeping.

We stowed away our dry garments and donned the rags and tatters we had stretched along the ceiling the evening before. They were still clammy wet. As for our footwear, we despaired for a time of getting into it, or of being able to walk if once we did. Our feet were blistered and swollen to the ankles, the shoes shrunken and wrinkled until the leather was as inflexible as sheet-iron. We got them on at last, however, and hobbled down the veranda steps and away. For the first hour we advanced by spasmodic bursts, picking our way as across a field of burning coals. James was in even more uncomfortable straits than I. The football buskins, theoretically just the thing for jungle tramping, had, in actual use, proved quite the opposite. The day before, the Australian had slipped and stumbled over the rubble like a man learning to skate. In drying, the shoes had wrinkled and twisted into a shape that gave anything but a firm foothold, and the heavy leather chafed like emery paper. Wherever he came upon a sharp stone, the sufferer halted to chop viciously at one of the cleats, cursing the missionary's judgment and snarling like one wreaking his pent-up vengeance on a mortal enemy. Before noonday came, he had pounded off the last cleat, not without inflicting serious injury to the soles; and at the first opportunity he borrowed a knife and transformed the shoes into a decidedly low pair of ox-

fords. But even after these radical alterations he was uncomfortably shod. I much doubt whether the white man has yet devised the proper footwear for jungle tramping. To be foot-sore seems to be one of the inevitable hardships of those who walk in the tropics. We, at least, suffered more or less pain at every step from Kawkeriek to the end of our journey.

Thenganyenam was no great distance from the frontier village. Our guide of the day before had turned westward, but the pathway between the adjacent hamlets was distinctly enough marked to be followed. It was not yet noon when we reached Myáwadi. A few showers had visited their fury upon us; but the brilliant sunshine was again flooding the world about us. Myáwadi was a more populous thorp than that we had left in the morning, pitched along the bank of the stream that marks the limit of old England's sway. An air of lazy, soul-filling contentment hovered over the tiny jungle oasis. With every puff of the soft summer breeze the tinkling of the little silver bells at the top of the pagoda came musically clear to our ears. Here and there a villager was stretched out on his back in the grass. It seemed ill-mannered to break the peaceful repose of the inhabitants.

Besides the stone and mud sanctuary soaring above the brilliant vegetation, the most imposing edifice was a bamboo barracks, housing a little garrison of native soldiers. Here we stopped, as was our duty before crossing the frontier. The sepoys were childish, good-hearted fellows who made known their astonishment and offered their condolences in expressive pantomime, and did their best to make as appetizing as possible the dinner of rice and jungle vegetables they offered. It was fortunate that they were so open-handed, for we could not have purchased food in the village. This jungle land has not yet reached the commercial stage.

The native lieutenant evinced a strong curiosity to know what errand had brought us thus far from the beaten track of sahibs, and our pantomimic explanation seemed only to increase his suspicions. When he grew querulous we mentioned the name of Damalaku. He sprang to his feet shrieking with delight, and, having danced about us for some time, detailed a sepoy to accompany us to the first Siamese village, with a note of explanation to the head man.

When the sun had begun its decline and the latest storm had abated, we left the barracks and Burma behind. The international stream was little wider than many we had already encountered, and barely waist deep. We forded it easily, and the tinkling of the pagoda bells

still came faintly to our ears when we climbed the sandy eastern bank,—in Siam at last.

The first village, we had gathered, was no great distance off, so we strolled leisurely on through the jungle, pausing to rest in shady thickets so often that the sepoy left us in disgust and went on alone. Two hours later he paused on his homeward journey to tell us in gestures that he had delivered his international note and that the village was waiting to receive us.

The day was not yet done when we reached the outpost of Siam, to be picked up at the edge of the jungle by a Siamese of ape-like mien, who conducted us to the hut of the village head man.

Picture to yourself a trust magnate of the most pompous and self-worshiping type, with the face of an Alaskan totem pole, the general appearance of a side-show "wild man," a skin the color of a door mat that has done service for many years, dressed in a cast-off dish cloth, and you have an exact vizualization of the man who ruled over Mäsawt. He received us in the "city hall," sitting with folded legs on a grass mat in the middle of the floor. Around the walls of the misshapen bamboo shack squatted several briefly-attired courtiers. Through the network partition that separated the hall of ceremonies from the family sanctum, peered a parchment-skinned female, and a troop of dusky children not yet arrived at the dignity of clothing. If we had waited for an invitation to be seated we might have remained standing all night. The attitude of the Siamese towards the European is quite different from that of the Burman. Their very poise seems to say:—"We are a free people, not the slaves of white men like our neighbors over the border."

We made ourselves comfortable on the pliant floor, with our backs to the wall, and lighted the saybullies that had done service for three days past. For more than an hour the head man and his satellites sat motionless, staring fixedly at us, and mumbling in an undertone without once turning their heads towards those they were addressing. The sun sank into the jungle and swift darkness fell. The parchment-skinned female drifted into the room and set on the floor an oil torch that gave a poor imitation of a light. At the dictation of the babu of Thenganyenam, I had jotted down a few vital words of Siamese. When conversation lagged, I put this newly-acquired vocabulary to the test by calling for food. The head man growled, the female floated in once more and placed at our feet a small washtub of boiled rice.

Now this Oriental staff of life is not without its virtues; but to eat one's fill of the tasteless stuff without any "trimmings" whatever is rather a pleasureless task. I dragged out my notebook and again ran my eyes down the list of Siamese words. Neither currie nor chicken was represented. The only word that appeared to be of any value under the circumstances was that for "sugar." I bellowed it at the head man. He stared open-mouthed until I had repeated it several times.

"Sugar?" he echoed, with an inflection of interrogation and astonishment.

"Yes, sugar," I cried, sprinkling an imaginary handful over the rice.

The councillors gazed at each other with wondering eyes, and the word passed from mouth to mouth—"sugar?"

"Sure, sugar!" cried James, taking up the refrain.

A man rose slowly to his feet, marched across to us, and, squatting before the dish, began to run his bony fingers through the rice.

"Sugar?" he queried, peering into our faces. "No! no!" He took a pinch of the food between his fingers, put it into his mouth, and munched it slowly and quizzically. Then he shook his head vigorously and spat the mouthful out on the floor.

"No, no; sugar, no!" he cried.

"Of course there's no sugar!" shouted James. "That's why we're making a bloody holler. Sugar, you thick-headed mummy!"

The official taster retired to his place; a silence fell over the company. We continued to shout. Suddenly a ray of intelligence lighted up the face of the head man. Could it be because we *wanted* sugar that we were raising such a hubbub, rather than because we fancied that foreign substance had been inadvertently spilled on our supper? He called to the female. When she appeared with a joint of bamboo filled with muddy brown sugar, the councillors rose gravely and grouped themselves about us. I sprinkled half the contents of the bamboo on the rice, stirred up the mess, and began to eat.

At the first mouthful such a roar of laughter went up from the assembly that I choked in my astonishment. Whoever would have guessed that these gloomy-faced dignitaries could laugh? The chieftan fell to shaking as with a fit, his advisers doubled up with mirth, and aroused the entire community with their shrieks. Wild-eyed Siamese tumbled out of the neighboring huts. Within two minutes half the village had flocked into the room, and the other half was

howling for admittance and a glimpse of those strange beings who ate their rice with sugar!

The surging mob must surely have burst the walls of the frail hut asunder, had not the head man risen to the dignity of his position, and driven all but the high and mighty among his subjects forth into the night. Among those who remained after the general exodus was a babu. He was a Siamese youth who had spent some years in Rangoon, and his extraordinary erudition, like the garments he wore in excess of the diaphanous native costume, weighed heavily upon him At the instigation of the head man, he subjected us to a searching cross-examination, and later communicated to us the result of a debate of some two hours' duration. The jungle to the eastward was next to impassable to natives; obviously such notoriously weak and helpless beings as white men could not endure its hardships. There was in Mäsawt a squad of soldiers with whom we could travel to Rehang when their relief arrived — in a week or ten days. Meanwhile we must remain in the village as government guests.

James and I raised a vigorous protest against this proposition. The only reply to our outburst was the assertion of the head man that we should stay whether we liked it or not. As the night was well advanced, we feigned capitulation and made ready to retire. The village chief lighted us into one of the small rooms of his dwelling and left us to turn in on the bamboo floor.

Had we anticipated any great difficulty in escaping in the morning it would have been a simple matter to have taken French leave during the night. Bolts and bars were unknown in Mäsawt, and even had our door been fastened, it would have needed only a few kicks at the flimsy walls of our chamber to make an exit where we chose. We had no desire to lose a night's rest, however, and fell asleep with the conviction that the head man would not be as energetic in executing his order as in giving it.

Nor was he. While the mists still hovered over Mäsawt, we packed our "swag" and entered the council chamber in marching array. The chief was already astir, but the only effort he made to thwart us was to shout somewhat meekly when we stepped out into the dripping dawn.

At the eastern end of the town began a faint suggestion of a path, but it soon faded away and we pushed and tore our way through the jungle, guided only by the pocket compass. The militant vegetation wrought havoc to our rags and cut and gashed us from brow to

ankles; the perspiration ran in stinging streams along our lacerated skins and dripped from our faces. Though we fought the undergrowth tooth and nail it is doubtful if we advanced two miles an hour.

The sun was high when we came upon the first evidence that man had passed that way before — a clearing not over six feet square, in the center of which was a slimy pool and a few recently-cut joints of bamboo. With these we drank our fill of the tepid water and had thrown ourselves down in the shade when we were startled to our feet by the sound of human voices. The anticipation of an attack by murderous dacoits turned quickly to that of a forcible return to Mäsawt, as there burst into the clearing a squad of soldiers.

There were seven in the party, a sergeant and four privates, armed with muskets, and two coolie carriers, each bowed under the weight of two baskets slung on a bamboo pole. After the first gasp of astonishment the soldiers sprang for the bamboo cups beside the water-hole, while the servants knelt down to set their burdens on the grass. The fear that the troopers had been sent to apprehend us was quickly dispelled by their acquiescence in permitting us to handle their weapons. They were bound for Rehang, but why they had been released from garrison duty at the frontier village so long before the time set, we could not learn.

A formidable force was this indeed. There was far less suggestion of the soldier about the fellows than of half-grown youths playing at a military game. The sergeant, larger than the others, came barely to James' chin; and the Australian was not tall. The privates were undeveloped little runts, any one of whom the average American school boy could have tied in a knot and tossed aside into the jungle. There was little of the martial air either in their demeanor or in their childlike countenances. They were dressed in regulation khaki, except that their trousers came only to their knees, leaving their scrawny legs bare. On their heads were flat forage caps of the German type; from their belts hung bayonets; and around the waist of each was tied a stocking-like sack of rice.

We conversed with them at some length, so adept had we become in the language of signs. Long after I had forgotten the exact means employed in communicating our thoughts, the ideas that we exchanged remained. Among other things I attempted to impress upon the sergeant the fact that my own country held possessions not far from his own. He caught the idea well enough, except that, where I had said Philippines, he understood Siam. His sneers were most scathing.

The bare suggestion that the white man held any sway over *Muang Thai* — the free country — was ludicrous. Even the carriers grinned sarcastically. A strange thing is patriotism. Here were these citizens of a poor little state, stranded between the possessions of two great powers, boasting of their unalienable independence, utterly oblivious of the fact that their national existence could not last a week if one of those powers ceased to glare jealously at her rival. When they had eaten a jungle lunch, the soldiers stretched out for their siesta, and we went on alone.

It was long hours afterward that we made out through a break in the undergrowth two miserable huts. Not having tasted food since the night before, we dashed eagerly forward. Two emaciated hags, dressed in short skirts and ugly, broad-brimmed hats of attap leaves, were clawing the mud of a tiny garden patch before the first hovel. I called for food and shook a handful of coppers in their faces, but, though they certainly understood, they made no reply. We danced excitedly about them, shrieking our Siamese vocabulary in their ears. Still they stared, with half-open mouths, displaying uneven rows of repellant black teeth. We had anticipated such a reception. Even the missionary of Moulmein had warned us that the jungle folk of Siam would not sell food to travelers. The age of barter has not yet penetrated these mountain fastnesses. What value, after all, were copper coins in any quantity to the inhabitants of this howling wilderness?

We waded through the mire to the next hutch. Under it were squatted two men and a woman, and a half-dozen mud-bespattered brats sprawled about a crude veranda overhead. This family, too, received us coldly, answering neither yes nor no to our request for food. We climbed the rickety bamboo ladder into the hut and began to forage for ourselves. The men scrambled up after us. When I picked up a basket of rice, the bolder of the pair grasped it with both hands. I pushed him aside and he retreated meekly to a far corner. In other baskets we found dried fish, a few bananas, and a goodly supply of eggs. Beside the flat mud fire-place were two large kettles and a bundle of fagots. While James broke up branches and started a blaze, I brought rain water from a bamboo bucket, in cocoanut shells, and filled the kettles.

Chimney was there none, nor hole in the roof; and the smoke all but choked and blinded us before the task was done. The rice and fish we boiled in one conglomerate mess, pouring it out on a flat leaf

basket when it approached an edible condition, and dashing out on the veranda for a breath of fresh air. The householder remained motionless in his corner. Having found, after long search, a bamboo joint filled with coarse salt, we seasoned the steaming repast and fell upon it. James had the bad fortune to choke on a fish bone, but recovered in time to swear volubly when he discovered in the concoction what looked suspiciously like a strip of loin-cloth. By the time we had despatched the rice, a dozen eggs, and as many bananas, we were ready to push on. I handed the downcast native a tecal — the rupee of Siam — which he clutched with a satisfied grunt, as well he might, for a shopkeeper would not have demanded a fourth as much for what we had confiscated.

Just at sunset we burst into the straggling village of Banpáwa. Some forty howling storms had added to our entertainment during the day and we had forded an even greater number of streams. My jacket was torn to ribbons; my back and shoulders were sadly sunburned; in a struggle with a tenacious thicket I had been bereft of a leg of my trousers; and the Australian was as pitiable an object to look upon.

Near the center of the village was an unpretentious Buddhist monastery beside which the priests had erected a shelter for travelers, a large thatch roof supported by slender bamboo pillars. Under it were huddled nearly a score of Laos carriers, surrounded by bales and bundles; Banpáwa being an important station of the route followed by these human freight trains of the Siamese jungle. They were surly, taciturn fellows, who, though they stared open-mouthed when we appeared, treated us like men under a ban of excommunication.

Physically they were sights to feast one's eyes upon; splendidly developed, though short of stature, with great knots of muscles standing out on their glistening brown bodies. A small loin-cloth was their only attire. Above it their skins were thickly tattooed to their necks with fantastic figures, all in red, representations of strange and repulsive beasts, among which that of a swollen fat pig was most often duplicated. Below the indispensable garment the figures were blue, even more closely crowded together, but stopping short at the knees.

It is said that this custom of making pictorial supplements of themselves was first forced upon the Laos by a wrathful king. A youthful servant, received as an attendant in the royal harem, was rapidly becoming a great favorite among the secluded ladies, when one sad day

the appalling information leaked out that the supposed country maid was really a man. When the culprit had been duly drawn and quartered, an imperative edict went forth from the palace of his raging majesty, commanding every male in the kingdom to submit forthwith to the tattooers' needles. Even to-day, this custom, mentioned by Marco Polo, is still universal among the males.

We sought to buy food from our sullen companions. They growled for answer. Like the soldiers, each wore round his waist a bag of rice; a few were preparing their evening meals over fagot fires at the edge of the shelter; but not a grain would they sell. A raging storm broke while we were wandering from one to another, shaking money in their faces. When it had abated somewhat, we hobbled out into the night to appeal to the villagers. There were some twenty huts in the clearing, into each of which we climbed, in spite of our aching legs Every householder returned us the same pantomimic answer — he never sold food, but he was sure his next door neighbor did, and the neighbor was as sure that it was in the next hovel that our money would make us welcome.

We played this game of puss-wants-a-corner for an hour, and we were still "it" when we reached the last dwelling. The village was really too populous a community in which to repeat the tactics that had won us dinner; but hunger made us somewhat indifferent to consequences. We climbed boldly into the hut and caught up a kettle. The householder shrieked like a man on the rack; and, before we had kindled a fire, a mob of his fellow townsmen swarmed into the shack and fell upon us. They were not particularly fierce fighters. We shook and kicked them off like puppies, but when the last one had tumbled down the ladder we awoke to the sad intelligence that they had carried off in their retreat every pot, pan, and comestible on the premises. Besides the bare walls there remained only a naked brown baby that rolled about the middle of the floor, howling lustily.

The village population was screaming around the shanty in a way that made us glad we had a hostage. James sat down, gazed sadly at the wailing brat and shook his head.

"No good," he announced. "Not fat enough. Anyway there 's no kettle to cook it in. Let 's vamoose."

We turned towards the door. A man was peering over the edge of the veranda. By the silken band around his brow we knew him for a Burman; and he spoke Hindustanee. We gathered from his excited chatter in that language that he had come to lead us to a place where

food was sold. As we reached the ground the throng parted to let us pass, but the frenzied natives danced screaming about us, shaking sticks and cudgels in our faces. A few steps from the hovel some bold spirit struck me a resounding whack on the back of the head. It was no light blow, but the weapon was a hollow bamboo and no damage resulted. When I turned to fall upon my assailant the whole crew took to their heels and fled into the night.

"All I've got to say," panted James, as we hurried on after our guide, "is, I'm bloody glad that's not a bunch of Irishmen. Where would the pioneer beachcombers of the Malay Peninsula be now if that collection of dish-rags knew how to scrap?"

The Burman led us through a half-mile of mire and brush, and a stream that was almost waist-deep, to a suburb of Banpáwa. Four huts housed the commuters. After long parley our guide gained us admittance to one of the dwellings and sat down to keep us company until our rice and fish had been boiled. He was something of a cosmopolite, fairly clever in piecing together a language of gestures and the few words we had in common. The conversation turned naturally — in view of the fact that we were two as ragged sahibs as one would run across in a lifetime of wandering — to the question of personal attire. Our sponsor was well dressed for the time and place, and the whim suddenly came upon him to substitute a tropical helmet for the silk band about his brow. He offered James a rupee for his topee, and pondered long over the refusal of the offer. Then he rose to depart, but halted on the edge of the night to hold up two fingers.

"Dō rúpika! Achá, sahib?" he pleaded.

"You're crazy!" retorted the Australian, "Think I want to get a sunstroke?"

The Burman shrugged his shoulders with a disgruntled air and splashed sadly away.

Our host was a sulky "wild man" in the prime of life, his mate a buxom matron who had not yet lost the comeliness inherent in any healthy, well-developed female of the human species. The pair, evidently, had been long married, for they had but seven children.

A section of the bamboo floor of the tiny hut was raised a few feet above the level of the rest, forming a sort of divan. On this we squatted with the family, chatting over our after-supper saybullies. The wife, for all her race, was a true sister of Pandora. What especially awakened her curiosity was the color of our skins; though they were not, at that moment, particularly white. She was seated

next to James, suckling two lusty infants, and gazing with monkey-like fascination at the hand of the Australian that rested on the divan beside her. Hugging the babes to her breast with one arm, she edged nearer and ran her fingers across the back of the Australian's sun-burned paw. To her astonishment the color would not rub off. She pushed up a sleeve of his jacket and began to examine the forearm; when my companion, till then absorbed in conversation, snatched his hand away with an exclamation of annoyance. No sooner had he let it fall again, than she resumed the examination.

"Quit it!" cried James, turning upon her, "Or I'll pay you back in your own coin." The husband snarled fiercely, sprang to his feet, and, crowding in between his wife and the Australian, glared savagely at him as long as the evening lasted.

We turned in soon afterward, eleven of us, on the divan. Though the front wall of the shack was lacking, we needed no covering; even when the rain poured we sweated as in the glare of sunlight. The sucklings took turns in maintaining a continual wailing through the night; the other brats amused themselves in walking and tumbling over our prostrate forms; a lizard chorus sang their monotonous selections with unusual vim and vigor. If we slept at all it was in brief, semi-conscious snatches.

With daylight, came the Burman to repeat his attempt to purchase my companion's helmet. James spurned the offer as before.

"Then yours, sahib," pleaded the fellow, in Hindustanee. "One rupee!"

"One?" I cried. "My dear fellow, do you know that the Swedish consul of Ceylon once wore that topee?"

"One rupee," repeated the Burman, not having understood.

"Tell him to chase himself," said James.

"Still," I mused, "if he'd give two dibs it'd almost double our stake."

"Are you crazy?" shouted the Australian. "The sun would knock you out in an hour."

"But two more chips might just carry us through," I retorted, "and starving's worse than the sun. I'll risk it."

"Will you sell?" demanded the Burman.

"Two rupees."

"One!" shrieked the Oriental, "Two for the sahib's which is new, One for yours."

There ensued a half-hour of bargaining, but the Burman gave in

at last, and, dropping two tecals in my hand, marched proudly away with that illustrious old topee, that I had won in fair barter with the Norseman, set down on his ears.

I handed one of the tecals to our scowling host and we hit the trail again. Out of sight of the hamlet we halted to don the extra suits in our bundles. The Australian gazed sorrowfully at his buskins while I slipped on my second pair of shoes. From the rags and tatters I was discarding I made a band to wind around my brow, after the fashion of Burma. Even with the top of my head exposed to sun and rain, as it was for days, I suffered no evil effects.

The territory beyond Banpáwa was more savage than any we had yet encountered; everywhere a rank vegetation so thick that our feet rarely reached the ground. Now and again we plunged into a thicket only to be caught as in a net, and, powerless to advance, retreated with rent garments and bleeding hands and faces to fight our way around the impenetrable spot. We were now in the very heart of the mountains. Range after range of unbroken jungle succeeded each other. From every summit there spread out a boundless forest of teak and bamboo, turgid with riotous undergrowth. Mountains that were just blue wreaths in the morning climbed higher and higher into the sky — rolling ranges without a yard of clearing to break the monotony of waving tree tops — and beyond them more mountains, identical in formation. Level spaces were there none. Descents so steep that the force of gravity sent us plunging headlong through thorn-bristling thickets, ended in the uncanny depths of V-shaped valleys at the very base of steeper ascents which we mounted hand over hand as a sailor climbs a rope. In our ears sounded the incessant humming of insects; now and then a snake squirmed off through the bushes; more than once there came faintly to us the roar of some distant brute. Of animate nature, most numerous were the apes that swarmed in the dense network of branches overhead, and scampered screaming away, at our intrusion, into the oppressive depths of the forest.

Though the rains continued unabated, there were fewer streams in these higher altitudes, and those were mere rivulets of silt fighting their way down the slopes. At every mudhole we halted to drink; for within us burned a thirst such as no man knows who has not suffered it in the jungle-girdled waist line of Mother Earth. Chocolate-colored water we drank, water alive with squirming animal life, in pools

out of which wriggled brilliant green snakes. Often I rose to my feet to find a leech clinging to my nether lip.

As the day grew, a raging hunger fell upon us. In a sharp valley we came upon a tree on the trunk of which hung a dozen or more jack-fruits within easy reach. We grasped one and attempted to pull it down. The short, fibrous stem was as stout as a manila rope, and knife had we none. We wrapped our arms around the fruit and tugged with the strength of despair; as well have tried to pull up a ship's anchor by hand. We chopped at the stem with sharp stones; we hunted up great rocks and attempted to split the fruit open on the tree, screaming with rage and bruising our fingers. Streams of perspiration coursed down our sun-scorched skins, hunger and thirst redoubled, and still our efforts availed us nothing. When we gave up and plunged on, our assault on the fruit had barely scratched the adamantine rind.

Weary and famished, matted with mud from crown to toe, and bleeding from innumerable superficial lacerations, we were still grappling with the throttling vegetation well on in the afternoon when James, a bit in advance, uttered a triumphant shriek.

"A path! A path!" he cried, "and a telegraph wire!"

Certain that hunger and the sun had turned his brain, I tore my way through the thicket that separated us. His cry had been awakened by no mirage of delirium. A path there was, narrow and steep, but showing evidences of recent travel, and, overhead, a sagging telegraph wire running from tree to tree. The compass had brought us again to that elusive route followed by the native porters.

A half-hour along it and we came to a little plain, intersected by a swift stream, in the backwater of which swam a covey of snow-white ducks. On the western bank stood a weather-beaten bungalow, over the door of which was a faded shield bearing the white elephant of Siam. Above it disappeared the telegraph wire. Our thirst quenched, we mounted the narrow steps and shouted to attract attention. There was no response. We pushed open the door and entered. The room was some eight feet square and entirely unfurnished, but in one corner hung an unpainted telephone instrument of crude and ancient construction. A spider had spun his web across the mouth of the receiver and there were no signs that the hut had been occupied within modern times.

"Nothing doing here," said James. "Let 's swim the creek."

On the opposite bank was a bamboo rest-house, smaller than that of Banpáwa, but with a floor raised some feet above the fever-breeding ground. Back of it, among the trees, stood a cluster of seven huts. We made the round of them, seeking food; but returned to the rest-house with nothing but the information that the village was called Kathái Ywá. Nine Laos carriers had arrived, among whom were several we had seen the evening before. They had, perhaps, some secret grudge against white men, for they not only refused to sell us rice, but scowled and snarled when we drew near them. The day was not yet done. We should have pushed on had not James fallen victim to a burning jungle fever.

With plenty of water at hand, hunger grew apace. For a time the forlorn hope that some more tractable human might wander into Kathái Ywá buoyed us up. But each new arrival was more stupid and surly than his forerunner. The sun touched the western tree-tops. James lay on his back, red-eyed with fever. Eat we must, if we were to have strength to continue in the morning. I made a second circuit of the village, hoping to win by bluster what we had not with cajolery. The community rose en masse and swarmed upon me. The males carried long, overgrown knives; the females, cudgels. I returned hastily to the rest-house.

The sight of the telephone wire awakened within me the senseless notion that I might summon assistance from some neighboring village. I left my shoes and trousers in charge of the Australian and dashed through the stream and into the government bungalow. At the first call I "got" someone. Who or where he was I could not guess. I bawled into the receiver English, French, German, and all the Hindustanee I could muster. When I paused for breath the unknown subscriber had "rung off." I jangled the bell and shook and pounded the apparatus for five minutes. A glass-eyed lizard ran out along the wire and stared down upon me. His mate in the thatch above screeched mockingly. Then another voice sounded faintly in my ear.

"Hello!" I shouted, "Who's this? We want to eat. D' you speak English? Dō sahib hai, Kathái Ywá. Send us some—"

A flood of meaningless jabber interrupted me. Two words I caught,—that old, threadbare phrase "nămelay-voo." I had rung up a Burman; but he was no babu.

"English!" I shrieked. "Anyone there that speaks English? We 're sahibs! Hello! Hello, I say! Hello—"

A Laos carrier crossing the stream that separates Burma from Siam

No answer. Central had cut me off again. I rang the bell until my arm was lame and listened breathlessly. All was still. I dropped the receiver and tumbled out of the hut determined to throttle one of the Laos carriers. In the middle of the stream I slipped on a stone and fell on my knees, the water to my arm-pits. The startled ducks ran away before me. I snatched up a club and pursued them through the village and back to the creek again, the inhabitants screaming in my wake. I threw the weapon at the nearest fowl. It was only a joint of bamboo and fell short. The ducks took to the water. I plunged in after them and once more fell sprawling.

Before I could scramble to my feet a shout sounded near at hand, and I looked up to see the squad of soldiers breaking out of the jungle. They halted before the government bungalow and watched my approach with deep-set grins. The sergeant, understanding my gestures, offered us places around the common rice heap. I returned to the rest-house for my nether garments. The villagers were driving their panting ducks homeward. The Australian struggled to his feet and we waded the stream once more, joining the soldiers on the veranda of the government bungalow. Their porters brought huge wet leaves to protect the floor, and built a fire within. A half-hour later the troopers rose to their feet shouting, "Kin-kow! Kin-kow!" easily understood from its similarity to the familiar Chinese word "chow," and we followed them into the smoke-choked building. In a civilized land I would not have tasted such a mess as was spread out on a banana leaf in the center of the floor, to win a wager. At that moment it seemed a repast fit for an epicure.

We slept with the soldiers in the telephone bungalow. James' fever burned itself out and he awoke with the dawn ready to push on. For the first few miles we followed a path below the telephone wire. In stumbling over the uneven ground my shoe-laces broke at frequent intervals. Well on in the morning I halted to replace them with stout vines. The Australian drew on ahead. Before I had overtaken him the path forked and the wire disappeared in the forest between the diverging routes. I hallooed to my companion, but the rain was coming down in torrents, and the voice does not carry far in the jungle. I struck into one of the paths; but in a very few minutes it faded and was lost. I found myself alone in the trackless wilderness.

Here was a serious mishap indeed. The Australian had carried off the compass; our money was in my bundle. Separated we were

equally helpless, and what chance was there of finding each other again in hundreds of miles of unblazed wilds?

I set a course by the sun and for three hours fought my way up the precipitous face of a mountain. To crash and roll down the opposite slope required less than a third of that time. In the valley, tucked away under soaring teak trees, was a lonely little hut. A black-toothed female in scanty skirt squatted in the square of shade under the cabin, pounding rice in a hollowed log. The jungle was humming its uncadenced tune. I climbed to the veranda and lay down, certain that I had seen the last of James, the Australian.

Under the hut sounded the thump, thump, thump of the pestle. What exponents of the "simple life," of which we hear so much where it does not exist, are these jungle dwellers of Siam! They are as independent of the outside world as their neighbors, the apes, in the tree-tops. The youthful "wild man" takes his mate and a *dah* and wanders off into the wilderness. He needs nothing else to win a livelihood and rear a family. The dah is a long, heavy knife, a cross between a butcher's cleaver and a Cuban machete. It is the one and universal tool and weapon of the indigène of the Malay ranges. With it he builds his house, gathers his food, and defends himself against his enemies. His dwelling is a mere human nest, as truly a nest as the home of the swallow or the squirrel. The walls are of bamboo, tied together with vines and creepers; the floor, of split bamboo; the eight-foot pillars that support his hut, the ladder at the doorway, the rafters, are all of the same material. Attap leaves for the roof grow everywhere. Cocoanut shells do duty as plates and cups; a joint of the omnipresent bamboo makes a light and handy pitcher or pot. To lay up a stock of bananas for flood time is the work of a few hours; a few yards of clearing supplies the householder rice in abundance. If he has a taste for "fire-water," an intoxicating drink can be made from the sap of the palm tree. Two loin-cloths a year may be fashioned from the skin of an animal or from a thick, woolly leaf that grows in swampy places. Take away the dah and there is nothing that is not of the jungle, save one import from the outside world — tobacco. The "wild man" and his mate are inveterate smokers.

But it was not by loafing in the shade that I should beat my way through to civilization. I rose to my feet and rearranged my "swag." If only I could hire a guide. Hark! The sound of a human voice came faintly to my ear. No doubt the owner of the hut, and of the slightly-clad female, was returning from a morning expedition. I

listened attentively. Then off to the right in the jungle rang out a familiar song: —

> "Oh, I long to see my dear old home again,
> And the cottage in the little winding lane.
> You can hear the birds a-singing,
> And pluck the roses blooming;
> Oh, I long to see my old home again."

It was the Australian's favorite ballad. I shouted at the top of my lungs, and, springing to the ground with one leap, crashed into the jungle. A thicket caught me in its sinewy grasp. I tore savagely at the entangling branches. The voice of the Australian rang out once more: —

> "Oh, why did I leave my little back room, out in Bloomsburee?
> Where I could live on a quid a week, in such luxuree. . . ."

He was further away now. I snatched myself loose and plunged on after him, leaving a sleeve of my jacket in the thicket.

"Hello, James! Hello!" I bellowed. He was singing with a volume that filled his ears. I opened my mouth to shout again, and fell through a bush into a clearly-marked path. Above it sagged the telephone wire and just in sight through the overhanging branches plodded the Australian.

"Gee, but you 're slow," he laughed, when I had overtaken him.

"When d' you find the path?" I demanded.

"Have n't lost it," he answered. "Why? Did you?"

"Have n't seen it for five hours," I replied.

"Holy dingoes!" he gasped, "Thought you were close behind, or I 'd have felt mighty little like singing."

We had no difficulty in keeping to the route for the rest of the day, and passed several carriers westward bound. With never a hut to raid, we fasted. Yet had we but known it there was food all about us. What a helpless being is civilized man without the accessories of civilization! It fell to uncouth jungle dwellers to bring home to us our own ignorance.

Weak from hunger, we had halted at the edge of a mountain stream well on in the afternoon, when we were overtaken by the soldiers. They had packed away their uniforms and wore only loin-cloths and caps.

"Kin-kow? Kin-kow?" cried the sergeant, with an interrogatory gesture.

We nodded sadly. He chuckled to himself and waved his arms about him, as if to say that there was food everywhere. We shrugged our shoulders skeptically. He laughed like a man prepared to prove his point and addressed himself to the squad. Two of the soldiers picked up cudgels, and, returning along the path to a half-rotten log, began to move back and forth on opposite sides of it, striking it sharp blows here and there. They came back with a half-dozen lizards, those great, green reptiles that sing their "she-kak!" all night long in the thatch of Indian bungalows. Meanwhile two others of the squad were kneeling at the edge of a mudhole. From time to time they plunged their bare arms into it, drawing out frogs and dropping them, still alive, into a joint of bamboo. The sergeant took a dah and cut down a small tree at the edge of the jungle. A servant dug some reddish-brown roots on the opposite bank of the stream, while his mate started a fire by rubbing two sticks together.

In a few minutes all were reassembled beside us. The lizards were skinned, cut up with lumps of red currie in an iron pot, and set to boiling. A servant drew out the frogs one by one, struck them on the head with a stick, and tossed them to his companion. The latter rolled them up inside mud balls and threw them into the fire. The sergeant split open his tree, extracted a pith some four inches in diameter, cut it into slices, toasted them on the point of his dah, and tossed them onto a large leaf spread out at our feet. The reddish roots were beaten to a pulp on the face of the rock and sprinkled over the toasted slices. Rice was boiled, the soldiers, grinning knowingly, took up their refrain of "kin-kow! kin-kow!" and the meal began. Before it was finished, both the jungle and its inhabitants had risen several degrees in our estimation. Extracted from their shell of mud, the frogs were found to be baked into brown balls, and tasted not unlike fried fish. The toasted pith resembled pickled beets. But best of all was the lizard currie. James and I ate more than our share, and offered mutual condolence that the pair sent to pound the old tree trunk had not remained longer at their task.

We went on with the soldiers, halting soon after dark at the bank of the largest stream we had yet encountered. There was no village in the vicinity, but the government had erected a military rest-house on the bank. In this we spent the night with the troopers, after partaking of a frog and lizard supper.

Beyond, the territory was less mountainous and the path well-

marked; but whatever advantage we gained thereby was offset by another difficulty. The river beside which we had left the soldiers was deep and swift, and wound back and forth across our course with a regularity that was disheartening. In the first few morning hours we swam it no less than fourteen times. It was the ninth crossing that we had cause longest to remember. Reaching the narrow, sandy bank a bit before my companion, I stripped, and, rolling my clothing up in the oilcloth, tied the bundle to my head, and plunged in. James began to disrobe as I reached the opposite shore. Without removing his ragged shirt, or his helmet, he fastened on his "swag" as I had done, and struck out. Being an excellent swimmer he advanced with long, clean strokes. Unfortunately he did not take care to keep his head pointed up-stream. The powerful current caught him suddenly broadside, dragged him under, and dashed him against a submerged snag. He righted himself quickly, but in that brief struggle lost both his bundle and his helmet, and in an effort to save both caught only the topee. The "swag" raced down stream. I sprang to my feet and dashed along the sandy shore in hot pursuit. The stream was far swifter than I. The tangled undergrowth brought me to a sudden halt, and the Australian's worldly possessions were swallowed up in the jungle.

I returned to find him sitting disconsolately on the bank. Luckily there was but one tecal in his bundle, but with it had gone his shoes, trousers, jacket, the odds and ends he had picked up on his travels, his military and citizenship papers, the pocket compass, and even that bottle of "Superior Currie Dressing"; in short, everything he possessed except a helmet and a tattered shirt.

But James was not a man to be long cast down by minor misfortunes. He tied the shirt about his loins and we proceeded. Relieved of his burden, he marched more easily and crossed the streams with far less difficulty than I. But in less than an hour his shoulders, back, and legs were painted a fiery red by the implacable sun; and the stones and jagged brambles tore and bruised his feet until he left a blood stain at every step.

We were again overtaken by the soldiers about noonday and halted for another jungle meal. Off once more, we forged ahead for a time, but found it prudent to wait for the troopers to lead the way; for the route was beset with unexpected pitfalls. As once, in fighting our way along the bank of the river, we crashed headlong through the

bushes into the dry, stony bed of a tributary — fifteen feet below. This mishap left little of my clothing, and gave the Australian the appearance of a modern Saint Sebastian.

A wider path began where we rejoined the soldiers. The higher mountain ranges fell away; but if the foothills were less lofty they were as steep, and the slopes were often clear of vegetation and reeking in mud. At the top of such a ridge we overtook an equine caravan returning from some village off to the southwest. Burdened with huge pack saddles, the horses began the perilous descent reluctantly. Suddenly three of them lost their footing, sat down on their haunches, and rolled over and over, their packs flying in every direction. James laughed loudly and slapped me on the back. The blow disturbed my equilibrium. My feet shot from under me, and, slipping, sliding, rolling, clutching in vain for support, I pitched down the five-hundred yard slope and splashed headfirst into a muddy stream at the bottom several seconds in advance of the horses.

Another mile left me barefooted and nearly as naked as my companion. Now and again we overtook a band of Laos carriers, once a young Buddhist priest in tattered yellow, attended by two servants. We had seen him somewhere a day or two before and remembered him not only by his garb but on account of the licentious cast of his coarse features. He joined our party uninvited and tramped along with us, puffing at a long saybully and chattering volubly. The soldiers greeted his sallies with roars of laughter and winked at us in a way to suggest that the tales he told would have made the efforts of Boccaccio seem Sunday-school stories. We deplored more than ever our ignorance of the Siamese tongue.

James was protesting that he could not continue another yard when we came most unexpectedly to the edge of the jungle. Before us stretched a vast paddy field, deeply inundated. The soldiers led the way along the tops of the ridges toward a dense grove two miles distant. The howling of a hundred curs heralded our approach, and as many chattering humans swarmed about us when we paused in a large, deep-shaded village at the edge of a river fully a mile wide. It could be no other than the *Menan Chow Pya* — the "great river" of Siam. Along the low eastern bank stretched a veritable city with white, two-story buildings, before which were anchored large native junks. It was Rehang. The soldiers told us so with shouts of joy and ran away to don their uniforms.

We threw off what was left of our garments and plunged into the

stream to wash off the blood and grime of the jungle. When we had prepared ourselves for entrance into civilization the soldiers were gone. We appealed to the villagers to set us across the river. They refused. We took possession of one of a dozen dug-out logs drawn up along the shore, and the village swarmed down upon us in a great avalanche of men, women, children, and yellow curs. We caught up two paddles and laid about us. In two minutes we were alone.

We pushed the dug-out into the stream and were climbing in when two ugly, wrinkled females ran down the bank and offered to ferry us across. They pointed the craft up-stream and fell to paddling, their flabby breasts beating against their paunches with every stroke, their bony knees rising and falling regularly. They were expert water dogs, however, and crossed the swift stream without mishap, landing us at a crazy wooden wharf in the center of the town.

In every published map of Siam you will find Rehang noted — somewhere within a hundred miles of its actual situation. Not that the city deserves such distinction. The geographer must have some name to fill in this vast space on his chart or he lays himself open to a charge of ignorance. On nearer sight the white, two-story buildings were rather pathetic, dilapidated structures. The avenue between them was not much better paved than the jungle paths, and deeper in mud. The sanitary squad, evidently, had not yet returned from an extended vacation. Here and there a dead cat or dog had been tossed out to be trampled under foot. There was no dearth of inhabitants; one could not but wonder how the town could house such a population. But the passing throng was merely a larger gathering of those same uncouth "wild men" of the jungle villages. The fear of being arrested for unseemly exposure soon left us. James, in national costume, attracted much less attention than I, in the remnants of jacket and trousers.

Just one advance agent of modern civilization had reached Rehang. Bill posters had decorated several blank walls with huge lithographs announcing, in Siamese letters a foot high, the merits of a well-known sewing machine. That we had expected, of course. In the back waters of modern progress are a few hamlets where Milwaukee beer is unknown, but the traveler who extends his explorations so far into the wilds as to discover a community ignorant of the existence of the American sewing machine merits decoration by the Royal Geographical Society.

It was easy, however, to overlook the backwardness of this tumble-

down thorp on the banks of the Menan; at least it was a market town. James dashed into the first booth with a whoop of delight and startled the keeper out of his wits by demanding a whole three cents' worth of cigarettes. Saybullies might do well enough as a last resort, but the Australian did not propose to be reduced to such extremities again. He splashed on through the reeking streets blowing great clouds of smoke from his nostrils and forgetting for the time even the smarting of his torn and sun-scorched skin.

Half the merchants of the town were Chinamen. We stopped at a shop kept by three wearers of the pig-tail and, dragging a bench into the center of the room, called for food. One of the keepers, moving as if he deeply resented our intrusion, set canned meat before us, and brought us as a can-opener, after long delay, a hatchet with a blade considerably wider than the largest tin.

When we rose to depart, the Celestials quickly lost their apathy. They demanded ten tecals. I gave them two. The market price of the stuff was certainly not over a half of that sum. A triple scream rent the air and a half-dozen Monguls bounded into the shop and danced like ogres about us. One caught up the hatchet and swung it high above his head. James snatched it from him, kicked him across the room, and threw the weapon among the heaped-up wares. We fought our way to the street. The keeper nearest us gave one stentorian bellow that was answered from every side. Chinamen tumbled out through every open doorway, out of every hole in the surrounding shop walls; they sprang up from under the buildings, dropped from the low roofs, swarmed out of the alleyways, for all the world like rats; screaming, yelping, snarling, clawing the air as they ran, their cues streaming behind them. In the twinkling of an eye the mob at our heels had increased to a hundred. We refused to sacrifice our dignity by running. The frenzied Celestials scratched us savagely with their overgrown finger nails, caught at our legs, spattered us with mud. Not one of them used his fists. When we turned upon them they recoiled as from a squad of cavalry and we could retaliate only by catching a flying pig-tail in either hand to send a pair of yellow-skinned rascals sprawling in the mud. They came back at us after every stand before we had taken a dozen steps. Our backs were a network of finger-nail scratches. We cast our eyes about us for some weapon and found two bemired sticks. Before we could use them our assailants turned and fled, still screaming at the top of their lungs.

Not far beyond, we turned in at the largest edifice in the town — the

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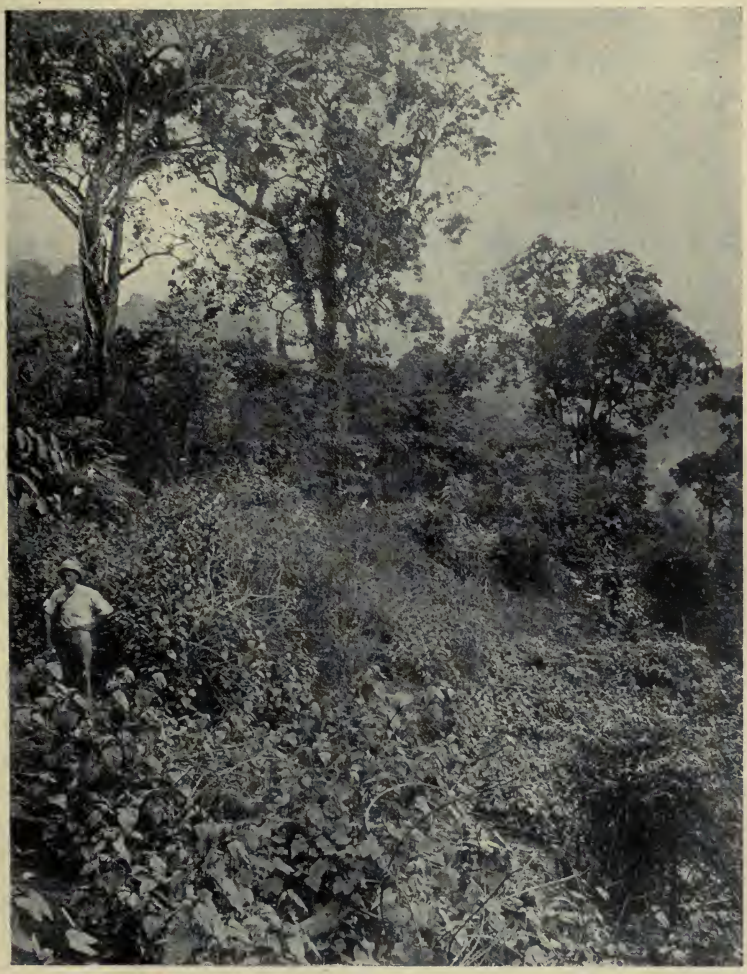

The sort of jungle through which we cut our way for three weeks. Gerald James, my Australian companion, in the foreground

Rehang barracks. Among the half-hundred little brown soldiers lounging about the entrance were our intermittent comrades of the few days past. It was plain that they had told our story. The recruits gathered about us, laughing and plying pantomimic questions. How had we liked lizard currie? What had turned our dainty skins so blood red? What ignorant and helpless beings were white men, were they not?

Suddenly, amid the general chatter, I caught a hint that there was a European on the floor above. We sprang towards the stairway at the end of the veranda. The soldiers shrieked in dismay and snatched at our rags. We must not go up; it was contrary to stringent barrack rules. A guardsman on duty at the foot of the stairs held his musket out horizontally and shouted a tremulous command. James caught him by the shoulder and sent him spinning along the veranda. We dashed up the steps. Two doors stood ajar. James sprang to one while I pushed open the other.

"Hello!" I shouted, "Where 's the white —"

A triumphant roar from my companion sent me hurrying after him. He was dancing gleefully just inside the second door, and shaking a white man ferociously by the hand, an astonished white man in khaki uniform with officer's stripes. I reminded the Australian of his costume and he subsided. The European invited us inside and sent a servant for tea, biscuits and cigars. Our host was commander of the Rehang garrison — a Dane, but with a fluent command of English. That we had been wandering through the jungle was all too evident; but that we had come overland from Burma was a tale he would not credit until the sergeant had been called in to confirm our assertions. Forgetting his military duties, the commander plied us with wondering questions until dusk fell, and then ordered three of the newly-arrived squad to arrange for our accommodation.

The sergeant, plainly overawed at finding us on such intimate terms with his dreaded chief, led the way through the barracks. The garrison grounds were extensive. Within the inclosure was a Buddhist monastery, resembling, if less pretentious than, the Tavoy of Rangoon. Here were the same irregular patches of untilled ground, where priests wandered and chattered in the twilight; the same disorderly array of gaudy temples, gay little pagodas with tinkling silver bells, and frail priestly dwellings.

On the veranda of one of the latter the soldiers spread a pair of army blankets. We were for turning in at once. Our seneschals would not hear of it. For a half-hour they trotted back and forth

between our bungalow and that of the commander, bearing steaming dishes. The little table they had set up was groaning under its burden before the sergeant signed to us to begin. There was broiled fish, a mutton roast, a great steak, a spitted fowl, fruits and vegetables of astounding variety and quantity. The sergeant laughed aloud at our astonishment when he drew out a pair of knives and forks from his pocket. Then he tapped his head meditatively with a skinny finger and ran off again into the night. He came back with a box of cigars and a quart bottle of whiskey!

Neither of us being particularly addicted to the use of fire-water, we wet our whistles and fell upon the fish. When I looked up again, the sergeant was watching me with the fixed stare of a half-starved cat.

"Kin-kow?" I asked, pointing at the steak.

The trooper shook his head almost fiercely.

"Try him on the gasoline," suggested James.

I poured out a glass of whiskey and held it out to him. In accordance with Oriental etiquette, he refused it seven times with a pained expression. At the eighth offer he smiled nervously. At the ninth he raised his hand hesitatingly and dropped it again. At the tenth he took the glass gingerly between his slim fingers, eyed it askance, tasted the liquor half fearfully, smacked his lips, gulped down a liberal half of the potion, and handed the glass to the privates behind him.

The mutton roast engrossed our attention. When it was finished, I found the officer grinning down upon me. I filled the glass again. He cocked his head on one side in the beginning of a shake and kept it there. His refusals had lost force. With the third glass there was no refusal. The fourth he poured out for himself. By the time we were picking the chicken bones, the three warriors were dancing gleefully about us. We sat down on the blanket for a smoke. The sergeant, shrieking his undying affection, threw himself down between us and began to embrace us in turn. When we kicked him off the veranda he locked arms with the privates and waltzed away across the parade-ground, screaming a high-pitched native song at the top of his lungs. The quart bottle stood on the table — empty.

We spent the night on the veranda. We did not sleep there. Our sun-scorched skins would not permit it; even had they burned less fiercely, we could not have slept. One would have fancied the monastery a gigantic hen yard, with the priests transformed into chan-

ticleers during the hours of darkness. After every shower the unveiled moon was greeted with a din of crowing that was nothing short of infernal. In the brief respite each gathering storm brought us, we tossed about wide-awake on our asperous couch, listening to the symphonic tinkling of the pagoda bells.

With dawn came a summons from the Dane. We hurried to his bungalow and joined him at breakfast. He had gathered together two pairs of shoes and four khaki uniforms. They were from his own tailor in Bangkok, still very serviceable, though fitting us a bit too snugly, and chafing our blistered skins. Rolling up the extra garments and swinging them over our shoulders, we bade our host farewell. As we left the garrison inclosure we came upon the sergeant, sitting on the ground, his knees drawn up to his chin, his face buried in his hands — a very personification of the baneful morning after.

CHAPTER XX

THE JUNGLES OF SIAM

THE route to Bangkok, such as it was, lay on the eastern bank of the Menam. This time we crossed the stream by the official ferry, a dug-out canoe fully thirty feet long, which held, besides ourselves and four paddlers, twenty-two natives, chiefly of the gentle sex. All day we tramped through jungle as wild as that to the westward, following the course of the river. Bamboo villages were numerous and for every hut at least a half-dozen, mangy, yellow curs added their yelping to the uproar that heralded our approach. We cooked our food where we chose and paid for it when we had eaten. The inhabitants were indolent "wild men" like those of the mountains, content to live and die in their nests of jungle rubbish, with a dirty rag about their loins. Occasionally a family ran away into the forest when we took possession of their abode. More often they remained where we found them, squatting on the floor, and watched our culinary dexterity with lack-luster eyes. Except for their breasts, there was nothing to distinguish the women from the men. Both sexes wore their dull, black hair some two inches long and dressed it in a bristling pompadour that gave them a resemblance to startled porcupines. Both had jet-black teeth. The younger children were robust little animals; the older, ungainly creatures with overgrown bellies.

Chief of the obstacles to our progress were the tributaries of the Menam Chow Pya. Sometimes they were swift and deep. Then we had only to strip and swim them, our bundles slung around our heads. What we dreaded more were the sluggish streams, through which we must wade waist deep in black, foul-smelling slush or half-acres of nauseating green slime, cesspools that seemed designed to harbor poisonous snakes. Once we dispaired for a time of continuing our way. We had been halted by a stagnant rivulet more than a furlong wide, too deep to be waded, too thickly covered with stewing slime to be swum. We wandered back along it for some distance. No stream could have been less fitting a scene for romance. Yet what was our surprise to find, where the green scum was thickest, an old dug-out scow, half roofed with attap leaves, anchored to a snag equi-

distant from either shore; and in it that same youthful priest of our mountain tramp, engrossed in the entertainment of as comely a female as one could have run to earth in the length and breadth of these Siamese wilds. We half suspected that he would resent being disturbed. At sight of the scowling face that he raised when we hallooed to him we were sure of it.

Still we could not halt where we were merely out of respect for romance. We beckoned to him to paddle ashore and set us across. He refused and snarled back at us. We picked up the stoutest clubs at hand and shook them at him. He laughed scornfully. I threw my weapon at the craft. It struck the roof and went through it. The priest sprang up with a whine, slipped his mooring, and, twisting his face into an ugly grin of feigned amiability, paddled slowly towards us. We sprang into the scow and five minutes later were plunging through the jungle beyond.

The sun was still well above the horizon when we reached Kung Chow. The Dane had told us it was twenty-two miles from Rehang. Kung Chow was no ordinary jungle village. It consisted of a bungalow of unusual magnificence, set in the center of a clearing on the bank of the Menam, with a half-circle of smaller dwellings round about and at a respectful distance from it. The main building was the residence of the "jungle king"; the smaller housed his servants and retainers.

Of this royal person we had heard much at breakfast that morning. To the commander of Rehang he was "almost a fellow countryman," as he hailed from Sweden. For many years he had been stationed at Kung Chow as manager of a company that is exploiting the teak forests, and the style in which he lived in spite of his isolation had won him his sobriquet.

We found him sitting in state on the veranda of his palace, gazing serenely out across the clearing. The servants that hovered about him looked like ludicrous little manikins in his presence, for he would have tipped the scales at perilously near a quarter-ton. The unruffled mien with which he noted our arrival bespoke a truly regal poise. We halted at the foot of the throne and craved the boon of a drink of water. Judging from the calm wave of the hand with which the "king" ordered a vassal to fetch it, one would have supposed that white men passed his palace every hour. He watched us silently as we quenched our thirst. There was no tremor of excitement in the voice in which he asked our nationality and destination, and he inquired no further.

"I can put a bungalow at your disposal," he said, "if you had planned on stopping here."

We were of half a mind to push on. It lacked an hour of sunset, and, to tell the truth, we had grown so accustomed to being received with open arms by Europeans that we were a bit disgruntled at his impassionate demeanor. In the end we swallowed our pride and thanked him for the offer. That decision turned out to be the most fortunate of all the days of our partnership.

The "king" waved a hand once more and a henchman in scarlet livery stepped forth and led us to one of the half-circle of bungalows. It was a goodly dwelling, as dwellings go, up along the Menam. Five servants were detailed to attend us. They prepared two English tub-baths and stood ready with crash towels to rub us down. The condition of our skins forced us to dispense with that service. When we had changed our garments a laundryman took charge of those we had worn. By this time, a servant had brought a phonograph from the palace and set it in action. The phonograph is not a perfected instrument; but even its tunes are soothing when one has heard nothing approaching music for weeks except the ballads sung by a crack-voiced Australian or the no less symphonic croaking of lizards.

Then came our evening banquet. For days afterwards James could not speak of that without a tremor in his voice. The supper of the night before was a free lunch in a Clark street "slop's house" in comparison. Least of the wonders that arrived from the storehouse of his jungle majesty was a box of fifty fat Habana cigars and a dozen bottles of imported beer; ice cold in these sweltering tropics.

We had just settled down for an evening chat when a sudden violent hubbub burst forth. I dashed out upon the veranda. Around the palace fluttered half the population of Kung Chow, squawking like excited hens; and the others were tumbling out of their bungalows in their haste to add to the uproar.

The royal residence was afire. From the back of the building a shaft of black smoke wavered upward in the evening breeze. When we pushed through the panic-stricken throng, a slim blaze was licking at a corner of the back veranda. Its origin was not hard to guess. At the foot of the supporting bamboo pillar lay a sputtering kettle over a heap of charred fagots. Around it the natives were screaming, pushing, tumbling over each other; doing everything, in fact, but what the emergency called for. A dozen of them carried buckets. Twenty

yards away was a stream. But they were as helpless as stampeded sheep.

James snatched a bucket and ran for the creek. I caught up the tilting kettle and dumped its contents of half-boiled rice on the blaze. With the Australian's first bucketful we had the conflagration under control and it was but the work of a moment to put it out entirely. When the last ember had ceased to glow, the first native arrived with water from the stream. Behind him stretched a long line of servants with overflowing buckets. They fought with each other in their eagerness to deluge the charred corner of the veranda. Those who could not reach it dashed their water on the surrounding multitude, and the real firemen; then ran for more. We were forced to resort to violence to save ourselves from drowning.

As the last native was fleeing across the clearing, I looked up to see " his majesty " gazing down upon us. There was not a sign of excitement in the entire rotundity of his figure.

" These wild men are a useless lot of animals," he said. " I 'm glad you turned out." Then he waddled back into his palace.

We returned to our bungalow and started the phonograph anew. Fully an hour afterward the " king " walked in upon us. He carried what looked like a great sausage, wrapped in thick, brown paper.

" I 'm always glad to help a white man," he panted, " especially when he has done me a service."

I took the parcel in one hand and nearly lost my balance as he let it go. It weighed several pounds. By the time I had recovered my equilibrium " his majesty " was gone. I sat down and unrolled the package. It contained fifty silver tecals.

Our second day down the Menam was enlivened by one adventure. About noonday, we had cooked our food in one of the huts of a good-sized village and paid for it by no means illiberally. Outside the shack we were suddenly surrounded by six " wild men " of unusually angry and determined appearance. Five of them carried dahs, the sixth, a long, clumsy musket. While the others danced about us, waving their knives, the latter stopped three paces away, raised his gun, and took deliberate aim at my chest. The gleam in his eye suggested that he was not " bluffing." I sprang to one side and threw the cocoanut I was carrying in one hand hard at him. It struck him on the jaw below the ear. His scream sounded like a factory whistle in the wilderness and he put off into the jungle as fast as his thin legs could carry him, his companions shrieking at his heels.

"When you are attacked by an Oriental mob," the Dane had said, "hurt one of them, and hurt him quick. That's all that's needed."

Miles beyond, as we reposed in a tangled thicket, a crashing of underbrush brought us anxiously to our feet. We peered out through the interwoven branches. An elephant, with a mahout dozing on his head, was advancing towards us. Behind him came another and another of the bulky animals, fifteen in all, some with armed men on their backs, others bearing a small carload of baggage. We stepped out of our hiding place in time to meet the chief of the caravan, who rode between the seventh and eighth elephants on a stout-limbed pony. He was an Englishman, agent of the Bombay-Burma Lumber Company, and had spent fifteen years in wandering through the teak forests of Siam. Never before, he asserted, had he known a white man to cross the peninsula unarmed and unescorted. For a time he was convinced that we were playing a practical joke on him and had hidden our porters and guns away in the jungle. Disabused of that idea, he warned us to beware the territory beyond, asserting that he had killed two tigers and a murderous outlaw within the past week.

"I shall pitch my camp a few miles from here," he concluded. "You had better turn back and spend the night with me. It's all of thirty miles from Kung Chow to here, more than enough for one day."

We declined the offer, having no desire to cover the same territory thrice. The Englishman wrote us a letter of introduction to his sub-agent in the next village, and, as that hamlet was some distance off, we took our leave at once.

For miles we struggled on through the tangle of vegetation without encountering a sign of the hand of man. The shadows lengthened eastward, twilight fell and thickened to darkness. To travel by night in this jungle country is utterly impossible. We paid for our attempt to do so by losing our way and sinking to our knees in a slimy swamp. When we had dragged ourselves to more solid ground, all sense of direction was gone. With raging thirst and gnawing hunger we threw ourselves down in the depths of the wilderness. The ground was soft and wet. In ten minutes we had sunk half out of sight. I pulled my "swag" loose and rolled over to another spot. It was softer and wetter than the one I had left.

"Hark!" murmured James suddenly. "Is that a dog barking? Perhaps there's a village near."

We listened intently, breathlessly. A far-off howl sounded above the droning of the jungle. Possibly some dog was baying the faint

"An elephant, with a mahout dozing on his head, was advancing toward us"

Myself after four days in the jungle, and the Siamese soldiers with whom we fell in now and then between Myáwadi and Rehang. I had sold my helmet

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face of the moon. There was an equal possibility that we had heard the roar of some beast abroad in quest of prey. "Tigers abound," the Englishman had said. So must snakes in this reptile-breeding undergrowth. A crackling of twigs close beside me sent an electric shock along my spine. I opened my mouth to call to James. He forstalled me.

"Hello!" he whispered. "Say, I'll get a fever if I sleep in this mud. Let's try that big tree there."

It was a gigantic growth for the tropics. The lowest of its wide-spreading branches the Australian could reach from my shoulders. He pulled me up after him and we climbed higher. I sat down astride a great limb, tied my bundle above me, and, leaning against the trunk, sank into a doze.

I was aroused by a blow in the ribs.

"Quit it!" cried James angrily, thumping me again, "What the deuce are you tearing my clothes off for?"

I opened my mouth to protest, but was interrupted by a violent chattering in the branches above, as a band of monkeys scampered away at sound of our voices. They soon returned. For half the night those jabbering, clawing little brutes kept us awake and ended by driving us from the tree entirely. We spent the hours of darkness left, on the ground at its foot, indifferent alike to snakes and tigers.

When daylight came we found the river again within a few hundred yards of our resting place. A good hour afterward we stumbled, more asleep than awake, into a village on the northern bank of a large tributary of the Menam. It was Klong Sua Mak, the home of the lumberman's subagent; but our letter of introduction served us no purpose, for we could not find the addressee. It did not matter much. The place had so far advanced in civilization as to possess a shop where food was sold. In it we made up for our fast of the night before.

The meal was barely over when we were again in the midst of a village riot. It was all the fault of the natives. We offered them money to row us across the tributary, but they turned scornfully away. When we stepped into one of the dug-outs drawn up on the bank, they charged down upon us, waving their dahs. It was no such burlesque of a fight as that of the day before. But for a pike pole in the boat we might not have continued our wanderings beyond Klong Sua Mak. At the crisis of the conflict a howling fellow, swinging a

great knife, bounded suddenly into the craft. James caught him by an arm and a leg. A glistening brown body flashed high in the air; there sounded one long-drawn shriek; and the bold patriot sank in the murky water some distance behind us. When he came again to the surface, unarmed, we had pushed off from the shore.

"Damn niggers!" growled the Australian, catching up a paddle. "Serve 'em right if we kept their bloody old hollow log and went down to Bangkok in her. What say we do?" he cried, "My feet are nothing but two blisters."

For answer I swung the craft half round and we glided out into the Menam. A boat load of natives put out behind us, but instead of following in our wake they paddled across the river and down the opposite bank. We stretched out in the bottom of the dug-out and, drifting with the current, let them outstrip us. Far down the stream they turned in at a grove above which rose a white building. I dozed a moment and then sat up suddenly with a shout. The boat load had pushed off again, and behind them came a second canoe bearing six khaki-clad soldiers, armed with muskets. The white building was a military post, and a part of the redoubtable Siamese army was on our trail.

"Swing her ashore," cried James, grasping his paddle. "No naval battles in mine."

The dug-out grounded on the sloping bank. Between the jungle and the water's edge was a narrow open space. Adjusting our "swag," we set off down the bank at any easy pace. The "wild men" beached their boats near the abandoned dug-out and dashed after us, shouting angrily. A few paces away the soldiers drew up a line and leveled five muskets at us. The sergeant shouted an order commandingly. An icy chill ran up and down my spinal column, but we marched on with even stride. Knowing what we did of the Siamese soldier, we were convinced that the little brown fellows would not dare shoot down a white man in cold blood. Nor was our judgment at fault. When we had advanced a few yards the squad ran after us and drew up once more in firing line. The sergeant bellowed in stentorian tones; but the guns hung fire.

Seven times this manœuvre was repeated. We were already a half-mile from the landing place. Suddenly, a villager snatched a musket from a soldier and, running close up on our heels, took deliberate aim. His appearance stamped him as the bold, bad man of that region. My flesh crawled in anticipation of the sting of a bullet. I caught my-

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Bangkok is a city of many canals

self wondering in what part of my body it would be lodged. But the fellow vented his anger in shrieking and aiming; he dared not pull the trigger.

Finding us indifferent to all threats, the sergeant changed his tactics. The scene became ludicrous. One by one the barefooted troopers slipped up behind us and snatched at our packs and jackets. When we turned on them they fell back wild eyed. Their persistence grew annoying.

"Tip me off when the next one tries it," said James.

Out of a corner of an eye I watched a soldier steal up on my companion and reach for his depleted "swag."

"Now!" I shouted.

The Australian whirled and caught the trooper's musket in both hands. The fellow let go of it with a scream, and the whole following band, sergeant, soldiers, villagers, and bold, bad man turned tail and fled.

Miles beyond we met two lone soldiers perambulating northward, and, knowing that they were sure to stop at the post of our recent adversaries, we forced the musket upon them and plodded on clear of conscience.

Once more we were benighted in the jungle and again the ground was soggy and the trees alive with monkeys. On the following day, for all our sleepiness and blistered feet, we tramped a full thirty miles and spent that night in an odoriferous bamboo hut, much against the owner's will — and our own.

Forty-eight hours after our escape from the soldiers we reached Pakhampo, an important village numbering several Europeans among its inhabitants. With one of these we took dinner. His house floated on a bamboo raft in a tributary of the Menam, his servants were "wild men" of his own training, and his wife a native. Unfeminine as is the female of Siam, with her black teeth and her bristling pompadour, half the white residents of the kingdom, many of them men of education and personality, are thus mated.

A German syndicate has undertaken the construction of the first railway of Siam. We struck out along the top of the unfinished grade in the early afternoon, and, no longer hampered by entangling undergrowth, set such a pace as we had not before in weeks. Long after dark we reached the residence of a German superintendent of construction, who gave us leave to sleep in an adjoining hut, in which were stored several tons of dynamite. An hour's tramp next morning

brought us to "rail head" and the work train. Hundreds of Chinese coolies, in mud-bespattered trousers and leaf hats three feet in diameter, swarmed upon the flat cars as they were unloaded. With them we jolted away through the sun-scorched jungle.

Ten miles south the train took a siding and stopped before a stone quarry around which had sprung up a helter-skelter Chinese village. A deluge drove us into a shop where *samshoo,* food, and coolie clothing were sold, and we whiled away a gloomy morning in discussing the characters of the proprietors, whose chief pastime, when they were not quarreling over their cards, was to toss back and forth about the room a dozen boxes of dynamite. At noon they set out on these same boxes a generous dinner of spitted pork, jerked duck, and rice wine; and invited us to join them. We did so, being hungry, yet anticipating a sad depletion of our funds when the quarter-hour of Gargantua came. All through the meal the Chinamen were most attentive. When it was ended they rolled us cigarettes in wooden wrappers, such as they smoked incessantly even while eating.

"Suppose they'll want the whole bloody fortune now," sighed James, as I drew out money to pay them. To our unbounded surprise, however, they refused to accept a copper.

"What the devil do you suppose their game is?" gasped the Australian. "Something foxy, or I'm a dingo. Never saw a pig-tail look a bob in the face before without grabbing for it."

The dean of the shopkeepers, a shifty-eyed old fellow with a straggly grey cue, swung suddenly round upon us.

"Belly fine duck," he grinned.

Our faces froze with astonishment.

"Dinner all light?" he went on, "Belly good man, me. No takee dollies for chow. Many Chinyman takee plenty. You fink allee same me. No damn fear. One time me live Flisco by white man allee same you, six year. Givee plenty dollies for joss stick. Me no takee for chow."

The Celestials had grouped themselves about us, laughing gleefully at the surprise which the old man had sprung on us. Of the eight Chinamen in the hut, six spoke "pidgin" English fluently and had understood our every word.

We spent the afternoon in acquiring a Chinese vocabulary for the days to come. Nor were these jungle merchants poor tutors. At dusk they prepared a second feast, after which two of them shouldered our packs and led the way through the wilderness to a point on the

main line, where the locomotive of the work train was to halt on its way south. If we had not progressed many miles during the day, we had at least discovered an entirely new side to the Chinese character.

Freed of its burden of flat cars, the engine raced like a thing of life through the cool, silent night, taking the curves at breathless angles. We sat high up on the tender chatting with the Eurasian driver, who, having a clear right of way, left his throttle wide open until the station lights of Choung Kae flashed up out of the darkness. There was no hotel in the village; but the railway agent sent his coolies to arrange a first-class coach for our accommodation. The lamps lighted, the leather cushions dusted, a chettie set within reach, and our chamber was ready. A servant brought a bundle of Bangkok newspapers, and we sat late into the night, listening, for the first time in weeks, to the voice of the outside world.

At noon next day a passenger train left Choung Kae, and for hours we rumbled across inundated paddy fields, with frequent halts at excited bamboo villages. Then towering pagodas rose slowly above the southern horizon, the jungle died away, and at five o'clock the daily train of Siam pulled in at the Bangkok station. It is doubtful if Rice, meeting us face to face, would have recognized the men of whom he had taken leave in the streets of Rangoon just three weeks before. Until we had shaved and washed in a barber's booth we had not the audacity to introduce ourselves as white men to an innkeeper of the Siamese capital.

Somewhat to our disappointment, Bangkok was in no sense the barbaric metropolis of heartless infanticides we had so often pictured to ourselves in fighting eastward through the jungle. Spread out in the low, flat basin of the Menam, there was something of monotony in her rambling rows of weather-beaten cottages. Her ill-paved streets were intersected by many canals, alive with shipping in the morning hours, but stagnant during the rest of the day with low-roofed boats yawning at their moorings. Pagodas and rambling temples and monasteries were everywhere, occupying a large proportion of the city's area, yet unusual neither in architecture nor in Oriental ugliness. To the traveler who has seen the Far-East elsewhere, there was little novelty in the capital except her floating houses, set on bamboo rafts in the Menam and rising and falling with the tide.

The inhabitants, lacking the politeness of the Burmese, were dull and docile, stirring abroad, often, as briefly clothed as their brethren of the trackless bush. Chinamen were numerous, the European com-

munity by no means small. Not all her white residents dwell in Bangkok by choice. A majority of them, if popular tradition is to be credited, came thither hastily and show no longing to depart. For Siam has few treaties of extradition with the outside world. A few of these exiles have prospered and are commercial powers in the capital. Others seem content to live out their declining years in a simple bungalow of the suburbs, with a native wife and naught to disturb their tropical daydreams save the dread of that hour in which France or England may absorb the little buffer state and drive them forth to seek new refuge. Of these latter we met a half-dozen, among them two of my own countrymen, who made no secret of their wayward conduct in other climes.

There were neither beachcombers nor shipping-offices in Bangkok. Deck passage to Hong Kong, however, cost next to nothing, and four days after our arrival we made application for tickets at the steamship offices. To our surprise the company refused to sell them. Deck passage was for natives only; white men, insisted the agent, must travel first or second class.

We hurried back to our respective consulates and met again a half-hour later, each armed with a letter to the obdurate agent. What the representatives of our outspoken governments had written we had no means of knowing; but the notes were evidently brief and to the point, for the clerk, muttering angrily to himself, made out deck tickets with unusual celerity. The next afternoon an unclad female paddled us lazily across the Menam in a raging downpour and set us aboard the *Paklat,* a miniature North German Lloyd steamer that cast off her shore lines three hours later, and, slipping down over the sand bar at the mouth of the river, dropped anchor next morning in the cove outside to finish loading.

The *Paklat* was officered by five Germans and manned by a hundred Chinese seamen, stokers and stewards, between which two nationalities conversation was carried on entirely in English. In the first cabin were several wealthy Oriental merchants; "on deck," a half-hundred Chinese coolies. Discipline was there none aboard the craft. The sailors obeyed orders when they chose and heaped abuse on the officers when they preferred to loaf. For the latter, in constant dread of being betrayed to the pirates that abound in these waters, stood in abject fear of the crew.

Never before had the *Paklat* carried white men as deck passengers. The Chinese seamen, therefore, considering our presence on board

an encroachment on the special privileges of their race, had greeted our first appearance with scowls and snarls, and vied with each other in so arranging their work as to cause us as much annoyance as possible. We laughed at their enmity and, choosing a space abaft the wheelhouse, stripped to trousers and undershirt and settled down for a monotonous voyage.

Two sweltering days the steamer rode at anchor in the outer bay. On the afternoon of the second the entire force of stewards, some thirty strong, marched aft with their bowls of rice and squatted in a semicircle near us. Not satisfied with merely encroaching on our chosen precincts, one of the band sat down on the bundle containing my kodak. When I voiced an objection the fellow leered at me and refused to move. I threw down the book I was reading and, putting a bare foot against his naked shoulder, pushed him aside and took possession of my pack. In his fall he dropped and broke his rice bowl. The entire band, accustomed, like most Orientals, to avoid angry white men, retreated several yards, leaving their dishes of "chow" where they had been sitting. The chief steward, a snaky-eyed Celestial with a good command of English, berated us roundly in that tongue and then ran forward to summon the first mate.

"Vell! Vell! Und vat I can do?" demanded that pudgy-faced Teuton, when he had heard both sides of the story. "Vy you come deck-passengers? You must look out by yourselfs yet," and, picking his way apologetically among the screaming stewards, he hurried back to the bridge.

For a moment the Chinamen stood silent. I turned my back upon them and, sitting down on the bare deck beside the Australian, fell again to reading.

"Kang kweitze!" (Kill the foreign devils!) screamed the chief of the stewards suddenly. With a roar as of an overturned hive of gigantic bees, the Chinamen surged forward. A ten-foot scantling, left on the deck by the carpenter, struck me a stunning blow on the back of the head, knocking my book overboard; and I landed face down among the rudder-chains at the rail.

When I collected my wits a dozen Chinamen were belaboring me with bamboo cudgels. I struggled to my feet. James was laying about him right merrily. At every blow of his hard, brown fists a shrieking Celestial went spinning across the deck. We stood back to back and struck out desperately. Buckets, clubs, and rope-ends beat a continual tattoo on our heads and shoulders. Of a dozen bamboo

stools that had been scattered about the deck no less than eight were smashed to bits over our bare crowns. Inch by inch we fought our way around the deck house and, escaping from our assailants, raced forward.

In the waist stood four of the German officers, huddled together like frightened sheep.

"You bloody Dutchman!" cried the Australian, shaking his fist in the face of the first mate. "You 'd hang back and see a man killed. If there was one Englishman on board we 'd clean out that bunch."

The Chinamen had retreated; but fearing that they would throw our bundles overboard, we armed ourselves with two stout clubs and again started aft.

"Keep avay!" shrieked the first mate, "You make riot and ve all get kilt!"

"It 'd be no loss," growled James, over his shoulder. We marched around the deck house, swinging our weapons, and rescued our "swag" without mishap. In our haste, however, we forgot our shoes and the Australian's helmet. Once more we turned back towards the scene of conflict.

"Let dem alone," pleaded the chief engineer, "vy you pick fight?"

Having no desire to flaunt our belligerency in the face of the crew, and fancying their anger had cooled by this time, we tossed aside our clubs and continued unarmed. Grouped abaft the deck house, the Chinamen allowed us to pass unmolested. We stooped to pick up our footwear.

"Kang kweitze!" screeched the chief steward, and before we could straighten up they were upon us. It was a more savage battle than the first. The remaining bamboo stools were wrecked at the first onslaught. We struggled forward and had all but freed ourselves again when James stumbled over a bollard and fell prone on the deck. A score of Celestials swarmed about his prostrate form; every man of them struck him at least a dozen blows with some weapon. Whole constellations of shooting stars danced before my eyes as I sprang to his assistance. A Chinaman bounded forward with a scream and struck at me with a long, thin knife. Instinctively I threw up my right hand, grasping the blade. It cut one of my fingers to the bone, split open the palm, and slashed my wrist. But the fellow let go of the weapon and, thus unexpectedly armed, we were not long in fighting our way back to the waist.

When we had washed our wounds in salt water and bound them

up as best we could, we marched to the cabin to charge the captain with cowardice. He denied our assertion and, to prove his valor, armed himself with two revolvers and led the way aft. It was with considerable satisfaction that we watched a dozen of our assailants show wounds they had received in the encounter. The commander endeavored to make light of the affair, but assigned us to an unfurnished cabin in the deck house and left us to spend a feverish and painful night on the slats of the narrow bunks. In the morning there was not a spot the size of a man's hand on either of our bodies that was not black and blue. The Australian, too, had suffered an injury to the spine, and all through the voyage he was confined to his comfortless couch, where he subsisted chiefly on black pills doled out by the skipper, not only because his appetite had failed him but because he lived in constant fear of being poisoned by the Chinese " boy " who served us.

Eight weary days the decrepit old tramp wheezed like an asthmatic crone along the indented coast of Cochin-China. On the morning following the anniversary of my departure from Detroit two small islands of mountainous formation rose from the sea on our port bow. Several junks, manned by evil-faced, unshaven Monguls, bobbed up out of the dawn and, hooking the rail of the *Paklat* with grappling-irons, towed beside us, shouting offers of assistance to the passengers possessed of baggage. More verdant islands appeared and when we slipped into the horseshoe harbor of Hong Kong it was still half shaded by the wooded amphitheater that incloses it.

A sampan, floating residence of a numerous family, set us ashore. We made our way to the Sailors' Home. My hand had healed, but James had by no means recovered. As the day waned we made application in his behalf at the municipal hospital. It was the Australian's misfortune that he was a British subject. Had he been of any other nationality his consul would soon have arranged for his admission. But as an Englishman he was legally at home and must therefore shift for himself. For several days he was turned away from the infirmary on threadbare pleas. Then at last he was admitted, and I turned my attention to outgoing ships, eager to be off, yet sorry to leave behind the best companion with whom I had ever shared the joys and miseries of the open road.

The next morning I boarded the *Fausang,* an English cargo steamer about to sail for Shanghaï, and explained my desires to the good-humored British mate.

"Sure, lad!" he cried, booting across the hatchway a Chinaman who was belaboring a female stevedore. "Come on board to-night and go to work. We can't sign you on, but the old man will be glad to give you a few bob for the run."

At midnight we sailed. Again I quickly fell into the routine of watch and watch and life in the forecastle. Four days later we anchored in quarantine at the mouth of the Woosung, then steamed slowly up the murky stream between flat, verdureless banks adorned by immense godowns, and docked close off the Sailors' Home.

It is at Shanghaï that the American wanderer, circumnavigating the globe from west to east, begins to feel that he is approaching his native land. Not only is he technically at home in one section of the international city, but it is here that he meets the vanguard of penniless adventurers from "the States." Tramps from the Pacific slope venture now and then thus far afield, as those along the opposite seaboard drift across to the British Isles. But the world that lies between these outposts knows little of the "hobo."

Rumor had it that "the graft" was good in the Chinese port. Before I had been a day ashore I came across a dozen or more fellow-countrymen who had picked up a living for weeks among the tender-hearted white residents and tourists. That was no great difficulty, to be sure, for samshoo, the Chinese fire-water, sold cheaply; and an abundant meal of milk, bread, potatoes, and eggs was to be had for ten cents "Mex" in the establishment of a native who enjoyed the distinction of having lived in "Flisco."

There were delightful spots, too, in the close-packed city. Along the Bund in the English section was a pleasant little park to which white men, Indians, or plain "niggers" might retreat; but to which no Chinaman, be he coolie or mandarin, was admitted. When the sun was well on its decline a stroll out Bubbling Well Road proved an agreeable experience. Towards nightfall the European rendezvous was the broad, grassy Maidan, where Englishmen, in spotless flannels, and crumple-shirted Americans, perspired at their respective national pastimes. So numerous were the residents of Shanghaï hailing from "the States" that each evening two teams struggled against each other in a series that was to decide the baseball championship of southern China.

European Shanghaï is the center of business activity. Round about it lies many a square mile of two-story shanties that throttle each other for leave to stand erect, fed by a maze of narrow footpaths

aglow with brilliant signboards and gay joss-houses, and surcharged with sour-faced Celestials who scowl threateningly at the European pedestrian or mock his movements in exaggerated gesture and grimace. Cackling vendors zigzag through the throng; wealthy Chinamen in festive robes and carefully oiled cues pick their way along the meandering lanes; burly runners, bearing on one shoulder a lady of quality crippled since infancy by dictate of an ancient custom, jog in and out among the shoppers.

There is in Shanghaï an institution known officially as "Hanbury's Coffee House," popularly, as the "bums' retreat." Of the two titles the latter is more exactly descriptive. But its charges were lower than those of the Sailors' Home, and on my third day in the city I moved thither. With my "swag" under one arm I strolled into the common room and approached the proprietor behind the register. A dozen beachcombers were sitting over cards and samshoo at the small tables. As I reached for the pen a sudden shout sounded behind me: —

"By God! There 's the very bloke now! The bum that carries a camera. Hello, Franck!"

The speaker dashed across the room with outstretched hand. It was Haywood, that much-wanted youth, famous for his adventures in Sing Sing and India.

"I was this minute spinnin' your yarn to Bob here," he cried, indicating a grinning seaman at his heels, "when who should come in but yourself as big as life. Gee! I thought for a minute this rice-water was beginning to put me off my feet. So you 've beat it to here, eh? Show Bob the phizz-snapper or he 'll think I 'm a liar.

"Say," he continued, as Bob turned the apparatus over in his stubby fingers with the nervousness of a bachelor handling a baby, "where in Niggerland did you and Marten go that night you beat me out of the chow-room at the Home in Cally? You sure faded fast."

"Up country," I answered, and gave him a brief account of my travels since we had separated.

"Well, I 've had a hell of a run, too," he said, when I had finished, "though there was no jungle in it. When I made that pier-head jump out of Rangoon I thought I was signed on A. B. But the skipper thought different and it was down in the sweat-box for mine. The lads had told me she was bound for China, but before we was two days out the mate passed the tip that she was off for the States. It near give me heart failure, but I took a ramble through the bunkers

and as they was half empty I knew the old man 'd have to put in somewhere for coal. So I tried soldierin', hopin' to be kicked ashore. In three weeks we dropped into Yoko, but when I hit the skipper for my discharge he give me the glassy eye. So I packed my swag and went down the anchor-chain into a sampan at midnight, and the next mornin' give the consul a song and dance about the tub bein' the hungriest craft afloat and the mate the meanest. He took it all in and when the old man come ashore he told him to pay me off p. d. q.

"The month's screw give me a good blow-out that ended in two days by me gettin' broke an' pinched. When I got out I hit it off for Kobe on a passenger and turned a little trick the night I got there that landed me over seventy yen. It was a cinch I had to fade away, so I took a pasteboard to Naggy. But the graft was no good there, so I picked up with Bob an' a deck passage an' here we are. This is plenty near enough the States for mine. But say," he concluded, in a confidential whisper, "I have n't got a red. Happen to have the price of a flop that ain't workin'?"

In memory of old times I paid his lodging for the night and we wandered out into the city.

When I awoke two mornings later a dismal downpour promised a day of forced inactivity; and inactivity in a foreign land means ennui and a stirring of the Wanderlust. I packed my "swag" hurriedly, therefore, and an hour later was slipping down the Woosung on board the *Chenan* of the Nippon Yusen Kaisha. Among several hundred third-class passengers I was the only European; but I have yet to be treated more considerately by fellow-travelers. Our sleeping quarters consisted of two inclined platforms running half the length of the ship, on which, in my ignorance, I neglected to preempt a claim. But I lost nothing thereby, for no sooner was it noised among the Japanese that an American was unprovided for, than a dozen crowded round to offer me their places. I joined a party of four students returning from Pekin, and, by packing ourselves together like spoons, we found room without depriving any other of his quarters.

Three times daily we filed by the galley and received each a small wooden box divided into three compartments; the larger contained rice, the smaller, oily vegetables and tiny baked fish. With each meal came a new pair of chopsticks. Japanese food does not appeal greatly to the white man's appetite; but the food supplied on the *Chenan* was

far less depressing to the spirits than the steerage rations on many a transatlantic liner.

On the second morning out, the rolling green hills of Japan rose slowly above the sun-flecked sea. My companions hailed each landmark with patriotic fervor and strove to convince me that we had reached the most beautiful spot on the globe. In reality they were not far wrong. The verdure-framed harbor of Nagasaki was little less charming than that of Hong Kong; from the water's edge rose an undulating, drab-roofed town that covered the low coast ranges like a wrinkled brown carpet, and faded away in the blue wreaths of hillside forests.

The port was bustling with activity. Sampans, in which stood policemen in snow-white uniforms, scurried towards us. Close at hand two dull grey battle ships scowled out across the roadstead. Doctors, custom officers, and gendarmes crowded on board. For the first time in months I was sensible of being in a civilized country. In consequence there were formalities without number to be gone through; but a sailor's discharge is a passport in any land. By blazing noonday I had stepped ashore.

CHAPTER XXI

WANDERING IN JAPAN

"SET me down at the Sailors' Home," I ordered, stepping into the first 'rickshah to reach me.

"No good," answered the runner, dropping the shafts. "Sailor Home he close."

"We 'll go and see," I replied, knowing the ways of 'rickshah-men.

But the Home was unoccupied, sure enough, and its windows boarded up. The runner assumed the attitude of a man who had been insulted without reason.

"Me know ver' fine hotel,' he said, haughtily, "Many white sailor man stop. Me takee there. Ver' fine."

I acquiesced, and he jogged out along the strand driveway and halfway round the sparkling harbor. Near the top of one of the ridges on which Nagasaki is built he halted at the foot of a flight of stone steps cut in a hillside.

"Hotel topside," he panted, pointing upward.

In the perfumed grove at the summit stood a house so frail and dainty that it seemed a toy dwelling. Its courtyard was gay with nodding flowers, about the veranda posts twined red-blossomed vines. In the doorway stood a Japanese woman, buxom, yet pretty. Though her English was halting, her welcome was most cordial. She led the way to a quaintly decorated chamber, arranged cushions, and bade me sit down. I laid aside my bundle and gazed out across the panorama of the harbor, delicate in coloring; a scene rarely equaled in any clime. Fortunate, indeed, had I been to find so charming a lodging.

A panel moved noiselessly aside. The proprietress again slipped into the room and clapped her hands thrice. Behind her sounded a choral whisper, and six girls, lustrous of coiffure, clad in gaily flowered kimonas, glided towards me with so silent a tread that they seemed to float through the air. All were in the first bloom of youth, as dainty of face and form as they were graceful of movement. Twice they circled around me, ever drawing nearer, then, halting a few feet away, they dropped to their knees, touched their foreheads

to the floor, and sat up smiling. The landlady, standing erect, gazed down upon me.

"Sailor man, how you like?" she purred, "Ver' nice?"

"Yes, very nice," I echoed.

"Well, take which one you like and get married," she continued.

The 'rickshah-man, alas, knew the ways of sailors but too well. I picked up my bundle and, glancing regretfully down upon the harbor, stepped out on the veranda.

"What!" cried the matron, following after me, "You not like get married? Ver' nice room, ver' good chow, ver' nice wife, fifteen yen one week."

I crossed the flowery courtyard towards the stone stairway.

"You no like?" called the landlady, "Ver' sorry. Good-bye."

Beside a canal down near the harbor I found a less luxurious hotel. The proprietor, awakened from a doze among the bottles and decanters of the bar-room, gurgled a thick-voiced welcome. He was an American, a wanderer since boyhood, for some years domiciled in Nagasaki. The real manager of the hotel was his Japanese wife, a sprightly matron whose farsighted business acumen was evidenced by a stringent rule she had laid down forbidding her besotted spouse entrance, except at meal hours, to any other section of the hostelry than the bar-room. Most interesting of the household were the offspring of this pair, a boy and girl of twelve and ten. In them were combined the best qualities of the parent races. No American children could have been quicker of wit nor more whole-heartedly diligent at work or play; no Japanese more open to impression nor more inherently polite of demeanor. Already the father was accustomed to refer to his son problems too complicated for his own unresponsive intellect; the mother left to her daughter the details of flower-plot and wardrobe.

Lodged in an airy chamber, I could have slept late next morning had I not been awakened at daybreak by what seemed to be a rapid succession of revolver shots. I sprang to the window, half fearing that the proprietor was assassinating his wife in a drunken frenzy. In the yard below squatted the half-breed children, with a stick of "punk" and a great bundle of fire-crackers. I had forgotten the date. It was the Fourth, and Nagasaki was celebrating. All through the day bombilations sounded at regular intervals about the city; nor was the racket instigated entirely by American residents.

Ordinarily the boy and girl of the hotel dressed exactly like their

playmates and no sooner turned their backs on their father than they lapsed at once into the native tongue. But on this American day the boy wore a knickerbocker suit and leather shoes; his sister had laid aside her kimona and wooden sandals to don a short frock and long stockings. Instead of the intricate coiffure of the day before, her jet-black hair hung in two braids over her shoulders; and not once during all that festal day did a word of Japanese pass between them.

Two days later, garbed in an American khaki uniform chosen from the stock of a pawnbroker popular with soldiers returning from the Philippines, I sought out the railway station and took third-class passage for Hiroshima. Two policemen blocked my entrance to the platform, and, in spite of my protest that my history was recorded in full on the hotel register, they filled several pages of their notebooks with an account of my doings. For the war with Russia was at its height and a strict watch was kept on all white men within the empire.

The train wound off through a rolling, sylvan country, here circling the base of a thickly-wooded hill, there clinging close to the shore of a sparkling bay. Not an acre capable of production was untilled. Peasants toiled in every valley, on every hillside; their neat cottages dotted the landscape as far as the eye could see. Populous, wide-awake villages succeeded each other rapidly. The stations were well-equipped buildings bearing both in Japanese and English the name of the town they served. In his eagerness to imitate the western world the Jap has adopted one custom which might better have been passed over. The gorgeous landscape was half hidden at times by huge unsightly signboards bellowing forth the alleged virtues of every conceivable ware.

The coaches were built on the American plan, and every carriage was a smoking-car; for the use of tobacco is well-nigh universal in Japan among both sexes. Barely had a lady folded her legs under her on a bench across the aisle than she drew out a pipe in appearance like a long lead pencil, the bowl of which held much less than the smallest thimble, and a leather pouch containing tobacco as fine as the hair of the head. The pipe lighted, she took one long pull at it, knocked out the residue on the back of the seat before her, refilled the bowl, exhaled from her lungs the first puff, and, turning the pipe upside down, lighted it again from the glowing embers of the first filling. The pipe held only enough for one puff; the smoker filled it a score of times before she was satisfied, always keeping the smoke in

A swimming-school of Japan, teachers on the bank, novices near the shore, and advanced students, in white head-dress, well out in the pool

Women do most of the work in the rice-fields of Japan

her lungs until the bowl was refilled, and using a match only for the first lighting. Dining-cars were there none. At nearly every station boxes containing a goodly supply of rice, several boiled and pickled vegetables, one baked fish, and a pair of chopsticks only half split in two, were sold on the platform. The contents were always the same; the price fixed and surprisingly low.

I had not taken care to choose a through-train to Hiroshima. Not long after nightfall the one on which I was traveling reached its terminal, a town named Hakata, and left me to spend the night in the waiting-room. Before I had fallen asleep a band of youths employed about the station began a series of tricks that kept me wide-awake until morning. They threw vegetables and rotten fruit at me through the windows; they pushed open the door to roll tin cans across the floor; if I fell into a doze they sneaked inside to deluge me with water or drag me off my wooden couch. Much we hear of the annoyances to which the kindly Japanese residents on our Pacific slope are subjected; yet no band of San Francisco hoodlums could have outdone these youths in concocting schemes to make life miserable for a foreigner in their midst.

Two hours' ride from Hakata brought me to Moji and the ferry that connects the southern island with the largest of the kingdom. Policemen halted me on both sides of the strait and twice I was compelled to dictate the history of my past. From Shimonesaki the railway skirted the shore of the Inland Sea, passing the military hospital of Itsukaishi, where hundreds of convalescing soldiers, attired in flowing white kimonas with a great red cross on their breasts, strolled and lolled in the surrounding groves.

I descended in the twilight at Hiroshima in company with two English-speaking youths who had taken upon themselves the task of finding me a lodging. The proprietor of a hotel not far from the station acknowledged that he had never housed a white man, but begged for permission to show his versatility. I bade my new acquaintances farewell. The hotel office was a sort of patio, paved with small stones, from which a broad stairway with quaintly carved balustrade led upward. Mine host shouted a word of command. A smiling matron, short of stature, her inclination to embonpoint rendered doubly conspicuous by the ample *oba* wound round and round her waist, appeared on the landing above and beckoned to me to ascend. I caught up my bundle; but before I had mounted two steps the proprietor sprang forward with a scream and, clutching at my coat-tails, dragged

me back. A half-dozen servant girls tumbled wild-eyed into the patio and joined the landlord in heaping abuse upon me. I had dared to start up the stairway without removing my shoes! The sight of a guest at a Fifth-avenue hotel jumping into bed fully clad could not have aroused such an uproar.

I pulled off the offending brogans; the keeper added them to a long line of wooden sandals ranged along the wall; and the matron conducted me to a small chamber with a balcony opening on the street. Everything about the apartment added to the feeling that I was a giant among Lilliputians; the ceiling, gay with gorgeously tinted dragons, was so low, the walls mere sliding panels of half-transparent paper stamped with flowers and strange figures, the highly-polished floor so frail that it yielded under every step. With a flying start a man could have run straight through the house and left it a wreck behind.

The room was entirely unfurnished. The hostess placed a cushion for me in the center of the floor and clapped her hands. A servant girl slipped in, bearing a tray on which was a tiny box of live coals, several cigarettes, a joint of bamboo standing upright, and a pot of tea with cup and saucer. Having deposited her burden at my feet, and touched her forehead to the floor, the maid handed me a cigarette, poured out tea, and remained kneeling a full half-hour, filling the tiny cup as often as I emptied it. When she was gone I picked up the joint of bamboo, fancying it contained sweetmeats or tobacco. It was empty, however, and I was left to wonder until the hostess returned. When she had understood my gestures she began a wordy explanation; but I shook my head. With a grimace that was evidently meant to be an apology, she caught up the hollow joint and spat into it. The thing was merely a Japanese spittoon.

A maid soon served supper. She brought first of all a table some eight inches high, then a great wooden bucket brimming full of hard-packed rice, and lastly, several little papier-mâché bowls. One held a greasy liquid in which floated the yolk of an egg, another a small, soggy turnip, a third a sample of some native salad, at the bottom of the fourth lay in dreary isolation a pathetic little minnow. Of rice there was sufficient for a squad of soldiers; but without it the meal could not have satisfied a hungry canary.

As I ate, the girl poured out tea in a cup that held a single swallow. Fortunately, I had already served my apprenticeship in the use of chopsticks, or I should have been forced to revert to the primitive

Horses are rare in Japan. Men and baggage are drawn by coolies

Japanese children playing in the streets of Kioto

table manners of the Hindu. As it was, it required great dexterity to possess myself of the swimming yolk; and he who fancies it is easy to balance a satisfying mouthful of rice on the ends of two slivers has only to try it to be disillusioned.

The meal over, I descended for a stroll through the town. The host brought my shoes, grinning sympathetically at the weight thereof, and I stepped out to mingle with the passing throng. There is nothing more inimitable than the voice of the street in Japan. He who has once heard it could never mistake it for another. There is no rumble of traffic to tire the senses, no jangle of tramways to inflict the ear. Horses are almost as rare as in Venice, and the rubber-tired 'rickshah behind a grass-shod runner passes as silently as a winged creature. The rank and file, however, are content to go on foot, and the scrape, scrape, scrape of wooden clogs sounds an incessant trebled note that may be heard in no other land.

There are Oriental cities in which the stranger would hesitate to wander after nightfall; in this well-ordered land he feels instinctively that he is running less risk of disagreeable encounter than in any metropolis of our own country. Class and mass mingle in the multitude; evil and brutal faces pass here and there; the European is sometimes subjected to the annoyance of unseemly curiosity, he may even be roughly jostled now and then; for the politeness of the Jap is individual, never collective. But rarely does the sound of brawling rise above the peaceful falsetto of scraping clogs.

I returned to the hotel fancying I was doomed to sleep on the polished floor; but the matron, apprised of my arrival, glided in and inquired, by the cosmopolitan pantomime of resting her cocked head in the palm of her hand, if I was ready to retire. I nodded, and at her signal a servant appeared with a quilt of great thickness, which she spread in the center of the floor. To an uncritical wanderer this seemed of itself a soft enough resting place, but not until six pudding-like counterpanes had been piled one on top of the other was the landlady content. Over this couch, that had taken on the form of a huge layer-cake, the pair spread a coverlet — there were no sheets — and backed out of the room. I rose to disrobe, but before I had touched a button they were back again, this time dragging behind them a great net, stout enough in texture to have held Paul's draught of fishes. Disentangled, the thing proved to be canopy-shaped. While the matron attached the four corners of the top to hooks in the ceiling, the maid tucked the edges in under the stack of quilts.

I was not averse to retiring at once, but at that moment there arrived a cotton-clad youth who announced himself as a police interpreter. Official Hiroshima was anxious to know more of the *Americajin* whose arrival had been reported by the station guards. The youth drew forth a legal form and read, in a singsong voice, questions covering every period of my existence since squalling infancy. Between each the pause was long, for the interpreter must repeat each answer to the open-mouthed females kneeling beside us and set it down in the muscular native script. I passed a yawning half-hour before he was finished, and another before he ended a smoke-choked oration on the joy which my coming had awakened in the hearts of his fellow officers. Ere he departed he found opportunity to inquire into my plans for the future. I announced my intention of continuing eastward in the morning.

"You must go so fastly?" he queried, with grief-stricken countenance. "Then you shall go on the ten o'clock train; there is no other but very late."

I had no notion of leaving Hiroshima on any train, but, considering my plans no affair of his, I held my peace. He departed at last and a moment later I was sorry I could not call him back long enough to interpret my orders to the matron and her maid. The pair refused to leave the room. When I pointed at the door they waved their hands towards the bed in a gesture that said I was at liberty to disrobe and turn in. But neither rose from her knees. I tried more energetic pantomime. The matron certainly understood, for she dismissed the servant; but refused herself to withdraw. I began to unbutton my jacket, hoping the suggestion would prove effective. She sighed audibly and settled down on her heels. I sat down on my cushion and lighted a cigarette, determined to smoke her out. She drew out a tobacco pouch and a pipe, picked the cigarette out of my fingers to light the first filling, and blew clouds of smoke at the ceiling.

Perhaps she was waiting to tuck me in when once I was abed. The notion seemed ludicrous; yet that was exactly for what she was waiting. With much shouting I prevailed upon her at last — not to leave the room, but to turn her back to me. Slipping off my outer garments, I crawled under the net and drew the coverlet over me. The matron rose gravely to her feet and marched twice round my couch, tucking in a quilt corner here, fastening a fold of the *kaya* there. Then, closing the panels on every side, she picked up the lamp and departed.

The room soon grew stuffy. I crawled out to push back one of the panels opening on the veranda. Barely had I regained my couch, however, when a trembling of the floor announced approaching footsteps and that irrepressible female appeared on the balcony, silhouetted against the starlit sky. Calling out something I did not understand — fortunately perhaps — she pushed the panel shut again. I am accustomed to sleep with wide open windows; but it was useless to contend against fate. My guardian angel of the embonpoint knew that the only safe sleeping chamber was a tightly-closed room; and in such I spent the night.

Rarely have I experienced a stranger sensation than at the moment of awakening in that hotel of Hiroshima. It was broad daylight. The sun was streaming in across the balcony, and the incessant scraping of clogs sounded from the street below. But the room in which I had gone to bed had entirely disappeared! I sat up with bulging eyes. Under me was the stack of quilts, but all else was changed. The net was gone and I sat alone and deserted in the center of a hall as large as a dancing pavilion, the front of which for its entire length opened on the public street. The transformation was no magician's trick, though it was several moments before I had sufficiently recovered to admit it. The servant girls had merely pushed together the panels.

For all the sinuosities of her streets and my ignorance of the Japanese tongue I had no great difficulty in picking up the highway out of Hiroshima. A half-century ago it would have been more dangerous to wander unarmed through rural Japan than in China. Today the pedestrian runs no more risk than in England. There is a suggestion of the British Isles, too, in the open country of the Island Kingdom. Just such splendidly constructed highways stretch away between bright green hedge rows. Populous villages appear in rapid succession; the intervening territory, thickly settled and fertile, shows the hand of the industrious husbandman. But old England herself cannot rival this sea-girdled kingdom in her clear, exhilarating air of summer, in her picturesque landscapes of checkerboard rice fields, certainly not in the scenic charm of the Inland Sea.

The roadway, dropping down from the plateau of Hiroshima, soon brought to view this sapphire-blue arm of old Ocean, and wound in and out along the coast. Here and there a ripple caught the glint of the sun; in the middle distance and beyond tiny wooded isles rose from the placid surface; now and again an ocean liner, awakening

memories of far-off lands, glided by almost within hailing distance. In shallow coves unclad fishermen, exempt from sunburn, disentangled their nets and heaped high their catches in wicker baskets.

It needed a very few hours on the road to teach me that Japan is the home of the ultra-curious. Compared with the rural Jap the Arab is as self-absorbed as a cross-legged statue of the Enlightened One. I had but to pass through a village to suspend every activity the place boasted. Workmen dropped their tools, children forgot their games, girls left their pitchers at the fountain, even gossips ceased their chatter; all to stare wide eyed if I passed on, to crowd round me if I paused. Wherever I halted for a drink of water the town rose en masse to witness my unprecedented action. My thirst quenched, the empty vessel passed from hand to hand amid such a chorus of gasps as rises from a group of lean-faced antiquarians examining a vase of ante-Christian date. To stop for a lunch was almost dangerous, for the mob that collected at the entrance to the shop threatened to do me to death under the trampling clogs. In the smaller villages the aggregate population, men, women, and children, followed me out along the highway, leaving the hamlet as deserted as though the dogs of war had been loosed upon it. Once I passed a school at the recess hour. Its two hundred children trailed behind me for a long mile, utterly ignoring the jangling bell and the shouts of their excited masters.

Well on in the afternoon I had taken refuge from the sun in a wayside clump, when a youthful Jap, of short but stocky build, hurrying along the white route, turned aside and gave me greeting. There was nothing unusual in that action; a dozen times during the day some garrulous native, often with a knowledge of English picked up during Californian residence, had tramped a mile or more beside me. But the stocky youth threw himself down on the grass with a sigh of relief. He was out of breath; the perspiration ran in streams along his brown cheeks; his nether garments were white with the dust of the highroad. Like most villagers of the district he wore a dark kimona, faintly figured, a dull brown straw hat resembling a Panama, thumbed socks, and grass sandals. Perhaps his haste to overtake me had been prompted merely by the desire to travel in my company; but there was about him an air of anxiety that awakened suspicion.

I set off again and he jogged along beside me, mopping his streaming face from time to time with a sleeve of his kimona. He was

more supremely ignorant of English than I of Japanese, but we contrived to exchange a few confidences by grunts and gestures. He, too, had walked from Hiroshima. The statement surprised me, for the white stones at the wayside showed that city to be twenty-five miles distant. Enured to tramping by more than a year "on the road," I had covered the distance with ease; but it was no pleasure stroll for an undersized Jap.

Once my companion pointed from his legs to my own, raised his eyebrows, and sighed wearily. I shook my head. He pointed away before us with inquiring gesture.

"Kobe," I shouted.

"So am I," he responded by repeating the name and thumping himself on the chest.

I knew he was lying. Kobe was more than a hundred miles away; third-class fare is barely a sen a mile in Japan; it is far cheaper to ride than to buy food sufficient to sustain life on such a journey. The fellow was no beggar, for we had already toasted each other in a glass of *saki*. Certainly he was not covetous of the yens in my pocket, for he was small and apparently unarmed, and there was nothing of the footpad in his face or manner. Yet he seemed fearful of losing sight of me. When I stopped, he stopped; if I strode rapidly forward, he struggled to keep the pace, passing a sleeve over his face at more frequent intervals.

Could it be that he was a "plain clothes cop" sent to shadow me? The suspicion grew with every mile; it was confirmed when we entered a long straggling village. My companion dropped back a bit and, as we passed a police station, I caught him waving a surreptitious greeting to four officers in uniform, who nodded approval.

A spy! What reason had the police of Japan to dog my footsteps? My anger rose at the implied insult. The fellow was urging me to stop for the night; instead I redoubled my pace. Not far beyond the route forked, and, turning a deaf ear to his protests, I chose the branch that led away over steep foothills. The short legs of the Jap were unequal to the occasion. He broke into a dog trot and puffed along behind me. His grass sandals wore through; he winced when a pebble rolled under his feet. Night came on, the moon rose; and still I marched with swinging stride, the little brown man panting at my heels.

Three hours after sunset, amid the barking of dogs and the shouting of humans, I stalked into the village of Hongo and sat down in

the doorway of an open shop. A moment later the spy, reeling like an inebriate, his face drawn and haggard, dropped at full length on the matting beside me. His endurance was exhausted; and small wonder, for Hiroshima was forty-six miles away over the hills.

In the twinkling of an eye we were surrounded by a surging throng of dirty yokels. For Hongo is a mere mountain hamlet and its inhabitants do not practice all the virtues for which their fellow countrymen are noted. To stay where we were was to court annihilation by the stampeding multitude. I struggled to my feet determined to press on. The spy screamed weakly and the villagers swept in upon us and imprisoned me within the shop. A long conference ensued. Then the spy, leaning on two men, hobbled up the street, while another band, promising by gestures to find me lodging, dragged me along with them, the mob howling at our heels.

The fourth or fifth booth beyond proved to be an inn, a most un-Japanese house, for it was squalid and dirty. The frightened keeper bade us enter and set a half-dozen slatternly females to preparing supper. The entire village population had gathered in the street to watch my every movement with straining eyes. I sat down on a stool and it smashed to bits under me. A clawing, screaming mob swept forward to roar at my discomfiture. A half hundred of the boldest pushed into the shop in spite of the keeper's protest and drove me further and further towards the back of the building, until I was forced to beat them off to save myself being pushed through the rear wall. A woman brought me rice. The boors fought with each other for the privilege of being the first to thrust their fingers into it. Another servant poured out tea. The villagers snatched the cup from my fingers before I had drunk half the contents, and passed it from hand to hand. A third domestic appeared with a saucer of baked minnows. Each of a half-dozen of my persecutors picked up a fish in his fingers and attempted to thrust it into my mouth. They had no notion that such conduct was annoying. It was merely their way of showing hospitality.

The throng at the doorway surged slowly but steadily nearer. I caught up several clogs from the floor and threw them at the front rank of the rabble. The multitude fell back into the street, but my immediate entourage continued to snatch cups from my fingers and to poke me in the face with baked minnows. Vocal protest was useless. I picked up the bowl of rice and flung the contents into their faces. This time the affectionate fellows understood. When the dish was

A Japanese lady

filled again they granted me elbow-room sufficient to continue my meal.

A saner man might have profited by experience and taken care not to re-arouse the waning curiosity. In a thoughtless moment I filled my pipe. Before it was lighted I suddenly recalled that "bulldog" pipes have not been introduced into Japan. But it was too late. A hoarse murmur sounded in the street, like the rumble of far-off thunder at first, then swelling louder and louder; and with a deafening roar the astonished multitude surged pellmell into the shop, shrieking, scratching, tearing kimonas, trampling pottery under their clogs, bowling over the guardian shopkeeper, sweeping me off my feet, and landing me high and dry on a chest against the rear wall. It required a quarter-hour of fighting to drive them out again into the night and nothing short of grapeshot could have cleared the street before the building as long as there remained a possibility of once more catching sight of that giant pipe.

I took good care to keep it out of sight thereafter; but the multitude had not visibly diminished when, towards midnight, I signed to the proprietor that I was ready to retire. The inn boasted only one sleeping-chamber, a raised platform in one corner of the room carpeted with grass mats and partitioned off with dirty curtains suspended from the ceiling. This foul-smelling apartment I was forced to share with a dozen men and boys, odoriferous and ragged, who chattered like excited apes for an hour after I had lain down. All night long I was on exhibition. For when my companions were not striking matches to study my physical and sartorial make-up, the proprietor outside was raising a corner of the curtain to display me to a group of gabbling rustics.

Profiting by experience, the police authorities did not set one man the task of following me all the next day. The first of a relay of spies overtook me at the outskirts of the village. He was long and lean, and for ten miles he stalked along several yards behind me, making no attempt to cultivate my acquaintance. At the first large village he was relieved by a stocky youth of more sociable disposition, who walked at my side and offered to "set 'em up" in a roadside saki shop at least once in every mile. As often I halted to watch some native craftsman. In one tiny hamlet a dozen women and girls, all naked above the waist line, were weaving reed mats in an open hovel. Far from objecting to my curiosity, they invited us to enter and placed ragged cushions for our accommodation. Before we were

seated the head of the establishment began to chatter. She was well past middle age and of the form of a well-stuffed grain sack,— just the type of human that can talk for an unlimited period without anything to talk about. The Japanese word for "yes" along the shores of the Inland Sea is "ha." It was the only reply which my companion found opportunity to interject into the conversation, and for a full half-hour he sat crosslegged on his cushion, observing at regular intervals and with funereal countenance: —"ha! — ha! ha! ha! — ha! ha! — ha!"

A few miles beyond he retired in favor of a much older man whose penchant was to be taciturn and stealthy in the discharge of his duty. Anxiously he strove to impress upon me that he was traveling in my direction by merest chance. If I halted, he marched past me with an expression of total self-absorption and slipped into some hiding-place a few yards down the highway until I went on. There was relief from the monotony of tramping in concocting schemes to shake him off, but every such attempt failed. If I slipped into a shop to run out the back door, the howling of the pursuing multitude betrayed me; if I dashed suddenly off into a wayside forest, I succeeded in rousing the spy to feminine shrieks of dismay, but before I could cover a mile he was again at my heels. In the afternoon I abandoned the road and darted away up a mountain path. At the summit I came upon a temple and a deep blue lake framed in tangled forests. This time, apparently, I had outwitted my shadower. I threw off my clothes and plunged in for a swim. When I regained the bank, the spy, panting and dripping with perspiration, lay on his back in a shady thicket beside my garments.

It was nearly sunset and the fourth lap in the police relay when a man pushed his way through a village mob that surrounded me and greeted me in a jargon that bore some resemblance to my native tongue. I sat down by a shop door to rest, and for a half-hour the fellow plied me with questions in near-English, with a sullen scowl and an arrogant manner that said as plainly as words that he had a decidedly low opinion of white men. His comprehension of my remarks was by no means complete; his interpretation of them to the gaping throng was probably even less lucid. About all he seemed to gather was that I was traveling on foot, from which he concluded that I was penniless.

I rose to depart and he caught me by an arm.

"So you tramp?" he cried. "One time me go States. Many time

see tramp. In States tramp many time hungry. Not in Japan. Jap man all good; give plenty. Wait. I make you present."

Having found his people the least lovable and by far the most selfish on the globe, I awaited the proposed benefaction with great curiosity. The fellow turned and harangued the gathering at great length. His hearers crowded up to give me congratulatory slaps on the back. I expected to have at least a ticket to my own land forced upon me. Having published his generosity to the four winds, the charitable fellow set the cavalcade in motion and marched down the street at my side.

"Jap man ver' good," he reiterated, while his admirers beamed upon me. "You damn tramp. No business in Japan, but ver' hungry. Me give you this."

He opened his hand and displayed a copper sen.

Being covetous of the half-cent as a souvenir of Japanese generosity, I stretched out a hand for it. The philanthropist snatched his own away.

"Not give money to damn tramp!" he cried. "Wait for shop. Me buy you two rice cakes."

Rice cakes being valueless as souvenirs, I rejected the kind offer and left the cavalcade to chatter their astonishment.

The village was long. A half-mile beyond I stopped at a shop and ordered supper, the price of which amounted to six cents. A great hubbub soon arose in the street outside, and, before the meal was served, my would-be benefactor, red-eyed with rage, fought his way into the booth.

"Why you tell you have no money?" he bellowed.

I denied having made any such statement.

"But you walk by the feet!" he screamed. "Me going to give you one sen because you not starve. You run way and buy dinner like rich man. You damn tramp, try be thief —"

I rose and kicked him into the street. His physical courage was on a par with his philanthropy. But his bellowing of my alleged perfidy aroused great anger in the gathering, and I was all but mobbed when I left the shop.

The half-mountainous scenery, the rampant curiosity of villagers, and the spy relay continued for two days more, at the end of which I turned in at the Sailors' Home of Kobe. Among the cosmopolitan beachcombers who spun their yarns in the back yard of the institution was one victim of the Wanderlust whose misfortunes are

rarely equaled even in the vagabond world. He was a youth of twenty, son of an Italian father and a Japanese mother. In early childhood — his mother having died — he had returned with his father to Naples. Ten years later a tavern brawl left him an orphan; utterly so, for never had he heard a hint of the existence of parental relatives.

Driven from the garret that had been his home, he joined the waifs that prowl among the garbage heaps of the Italian metropolis until he had grown large enough to ship as a *mozzo* on a coasting steamer. With the end of his apprenticeship came a longing to visit the land of his birth. He joined the crew of an East-Indiaman and "jumped her" in Kobe.

In the long interim, however, he had utterly forgotten the language of his childhood. English would have served him well enough, but unlike most seamen he had picked up barely a word of that tongue. His Italian was fluent, but it was Neapolitan Italian, and it is doubtful if there were a dozen men in all Japan who understood that dialect. A man suddenly struck deaf and dumb could not have found himself in sadder straits. There were European residents in the suburban villas of Kobe, there were generous tourists in her shops and hotels; but it was useless to tell them hard-luck tales in a language they could not understand. The Italian consul drove him off with wrathful words, indignant at the attempted imposition of a masquerading Jap. The Japanese were even less inclined to give succor to one who, in features a fellow countryman, aped the white man in garb and refused to speak the native tongue.

Under the weight of his calamities, the half-breed — tainted, perhaps, with the fatalism of the East — had degenerated into a groveling, cadaverous wretch, who cowered by day in a corner of the yard of the Home and crawled away by night into noisome hiding places. From time to time he contrived to get arrested, but the police were cruelly lenient and soon drove him forth again into a world that denied him even prison fare.

I had not been an hour in the Home when a servant summoned me to the office. The superintendent and two police officers awaited me.

"Say, Franck," began the former, "I hope that story you told me was on the level? The cops have it you're a Russian."

"You came last night? You walked from Hiroshima?" demanded one of the officers.

"Right you are," I answered.

"This is the one," he continued, turning to the superintendent, "The police followed him from Hiroshima. He is a Russian, they telegraph me."

"Nonsense!" said the manager; "He's an American."

"How can that be?" queried the second officer. "He wears even a Russian uniform."

A light broke in upon me. No wonder I had been so popular with the police for four days past.

"Russian nothing," I answered. "This is an American uniform from the Philippines."

"Just the kind the Russians wear," objected the officer, stretching out a hand to feel the texture of my jacket. "How, Mr. Manager, do you know he is an American?"

"By his talk, of course," replied the superintendent.

"But *you* are an *Englishman*," retorted the detective.

"Just the reason I can tell an American," responded the manager.

"Here! Look these over," I put in, producing my papers.

The officers, however, were unreasonably skeptical and not only discussed the documents at great length but insisted on inscribing in their notebooks a very detailed account of my movements since entering the country. It was all too evident that they did not believe that I traveled on foot by choice; and as long as I remained in Kobe I was conscious of being shadowed each time I left the Home.

On my third day in the city I rose early and passed out along the highway to the eastward. The police, evidently, had been caught napping, for no spy overtook me, and by noonday I was wandering through the maze of streets and canals of Osaka. My presence in that city was soon known, however, for an interpreter sought me out in the early evening at the inn to which I had retired. As if his quizzing were not sufficient, a second officer aroused me at dawn and not only put me through the usual catechism but followed at my heels until I had entered the precincts of the railway station. There two officers dragged me into their booth and subjected me to a cross-examination the length of which caused me to miss the second train I had hoped to catch.

Luckily the service was frequent. I purchased a ticket to Kyoto and boarded the ten o'clock express. Barely had I settled down in my seat, however, when two officers dashed into the car.

"The police captain say you come police station!" cried one of them, catching me by the arm. "Captain like speak you."

"The captain be blowed!" I answered, pushing him away.

"You come! Captain say not go with this train!" shouted the officer.

His companion came to his assistance and the pair laid hands on me. I braced my knees against the back of the next seat and let them pull. In the Western world we hear much of *jiu-jitsu* and the physical prowess of the Japanese. As for her policemen, and this was but one of many a personal encounter they forced upon me, it was never my misfortune to meet one with more strength than a schoolgirl. For fully five minutes the pair tugged and yanked at my arms and legs; but not once during that time was I in the least danger of being dragged from my seat.

The pair held the trump card, however, for they forbade the express to move while I remained on board. I took pity on my fellow passengers, therefore, and, pushing the pair aside, followed them into the station. In the first-class waiting-room they arranged a Morris chair for my accommodation, brought me several English newspapers and a packet of cigarettes, and, requesting me to remain until they returned, hurried away. There were several policemen in the square outside, however, who peered in upon me from time to time.

I had been reading nearly an hour when another interpreter stepped into the room.

"The police captain have sent me," he announced, with a conciliatory smile, "to say that you are not the man which he think and that you can go when you are care to."

I caught the fourth train and reached Kyoto in the early afternoon — and was immediately arrested. In short, not a day passed during the rest of my stay in the country, except in the open ports, that I was not taken into custody several times. Every officer to clap eyes on my khaki-clad figure was sure to demand my surrender, convinced that to his eagle eye his country owed its preservation. It was never difficult to shake off a pair of officers, a few slaps always sufficed; but, unlike other Orientals, they did not run away. They dogged my footsteps into temples and bazaars, through shrieking slum sections, down alleyways reeking with refuse, until an interpreter came to establish my nationality.

I spent a day in Kyoto and could have spent many more with pleasure. At the station next morning four yen more than sufficed for a ticket to Tokyo, with unlimited stop-overs. At Maibara a squad of Russian prisoners, garbed in Arctic cloaks and fur caps, huddled

Japanese canal-boats and coolies of Kioto

in a sweltering group on the platform. As long as the train halted not the hint of a jeer rose from the surrounding multitude, and the townspeople came in continual procession to offer the stolid fellows baskets of fruit, packets of tobacco, and all manner of delicacies. I left the train at Nagoya, third city of the kingdom, in which the chief point of interest is a great castle, at that season the residence of hundreds of Russian prisoners.

Among the few guests at the inn to which I turned at nightfall was an invalided sergeant, nearly recovered from two bullet wounds received in Manchuria. A paper panel separated his room from my own. We pushed it aside and shared a double-sized chamber. From the moment of our meeting the sergeant was certain that I was a Russian. Gestures of protest and innumerable repetitions of the word "Americajín" did not alter his conviction in the least. Too well he knew the czar's uniform and the cast of features of the "Moosky!"

We conversed almost uninterruptedly for three hours, during which time barely a word passed our lips. Certainly the sergeant must have been an actor in his preliminary days, for there was no thought nor opinion so complex that he could not express it clearly and concisely in pantomime. Rendered into English his gestures and grimaces ran as follows:—

"Well, you *are* a nervy fellow, yes, indeed! I suppose you 're only an escaped prisoner; but you 'll be shot as a spy the moment you 're found out. You 're not a Russian? Nonsense! Don't spring any such yarns on me. I 've seen too many of you fellows. You may fool these unsophisticated stay-at-homes, but I know you as I should know my own father. So would any of the boys who have been to the front. Oh, come, stop it! It 's no use telling *me* you 're an American. Tell that to the civilians and the policemen, the blockheads. It 's a mighty fine joke on them. But we 're alone now; let 's be honest. You need n't be in the least afraid of me. I 'm on, but I would n't peach for the world. But I 'm afraid your scheme won't work. There is not another man besides myself in Nagoya who would keep your secret. The first schoolboy or old woman to find you out will run his legs off to tell the police. You can bank on that. A year ago, before I 'd seen the world, I was as big a tattle-tale as the rest; but I take a more cosmopolitan view of life since I got these scars, and I can sympathize with a man now even if his skin *is* white."

The police interpreter came at this point to take my deposition, and the sergeant preserved a noncommittal gravity during the inter-

view, though he winked twice or thrice as the policeman bent over his notebook. When the visitor was gone, the soldier took up the story of his army life. It was a gesticulatory epic, rich in detail, amusing in incident. From the parting with his parents he carried me along with him through the training camp of recruits, across the Sea of Japan on a crowded transport, into the winter-bound bivouac in Manchuria, on cruel forced marches to the northward, into many a raging battle, to the day when he fell helpless in the bottom of a trench. His musket stood in a corner of the room. He used it often in the story and took great delight in assuring me that it had sent many of what he considered my fellow-countrymen to their final reckoning. He imitated their death throes with striking realism, rolling about the floor with twitching limbs and distorted features, choking and gasping as a man does in the last struggle. In comedy he was as effective as in tragedy. His caricature of a Russian at his prayers was a histrionic masterpiece; his knowledge of the "Moosky" service as exact as that of a patriarch.

We turned in towards midnight and parted in the morning the best of friends. From Nagoya the railway turned southward, and, following the old royal highway along the coast of the main island, gave us frequent glimpses of the ocean. The country grew less mountainous, often there were miles of unbroken paddy fields in which uncountable peasant women wallowed in the inundated mire, clawing with bare hands the mud about the roots of the rice plants. On the slopes, too steep to be flooded, long rows of tea bushes stretched from the railway line to the wooded summits.

I tired of riding at four and dropped off at Numadzu, a village of fishermen where the inhabitants to this day, I fear, remember me as the most unobliging of mortals. My host spoke some English. Taking advantage of his linguistic accomplishment, I requested him to prepare a bath. A servant placed and filled a tub in the center of the inn courtyard. I had begun to disrobe when a panel was pushed aside and into the patio stalked a dozen men and women, the landlord at their head.

"Here!" I protested; "I thought this was a bath room?"

"Sure! Bath room, a' right," returned my host. "Go 'head, make bath."

"Are you crazy?" I demanded. "Drive those women out of here until I have finished bathing!"

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The castle of Nagoya, in which many Russian prisoners were kept

Laying out fish to dry along the river in Tokio. Japan lives principally on fish and rice

"Why for?" inquired the Jap, while the company squatted along the wall.

I explained my objections and pushed them out one by one. The proprietor was the last to go.

"Why for you so damn selfish?" he growled. "Why you not make bath if ladies here? They not hurt you. They come see if you white all over. You come see ladies make bath they not give damn kick. Damn selfish American!"

I closed the panels and returned to my tub. But the curiosity of the unselfish ladies was not so easily overcome. As I ceased my splashing a moment, a poorly suppressed cough sounded above me, and I looked up to see the entire party gazing down upon me from an upper balcony. I caught up a cobblestone and they withdrew; but, though callers innumerable dropped in during the evening, the proprietor never tired of relating the story of my unprecedented selfishness.

Two policemen interviewed me on my way to the station next morning, a third was in waiting when I descended at the village of Gotemba, and a spy dogged my footsteps during the day's tramp among the foothills of Fujiyama. It is the ambition of the Mikado's government to "keep tab" on every foreigner from the day of his arrival in the country until his departure; and local officers strive diligently to supply the information demanded. But the system is something of a farce. The most tolerant tourist is apt to tire of being incessantly interviewed and, in a spirit of retaliation or merely for the sake of variety, to try his hand at fiction. As for beachcombers, there are few indeed who do not take delight in weaving "fairy tales" for gullible officials.

In the open ports of Japan I scraped acquaintance with more than a score of white sailors who had journeyed across the country afoot or "on the cushions." They passed for Americans, nearly every man of them, though three-fourths were Europeans and at least four, to my knowledge, Russians. But the point of nationality aside, there was not one of them who told police interpreters the same story twice. The Jap finds great difficulty in pronouncing the letter "L." Jocular beachcombers of my acquaintance swore on their discharge books that they had lain awake nights to piece together names unpronounceable for the next policeman. Hence it was that the traveler who announced himself at one station as "Alfred Leland from Lincoln-

lane," assured the officers of the next that he was "Lolo Lipland Longlock from Los Angeles." It mattered little what the wanderer dubbed himself; a police interpreter could not tell an American from a Zulu name, and though "Lolo Lipland Longlock" spoke only a half-hundred words of English, the name, alleged nationality, and "fairy tale" were solemnly inscribed on the records. That was well enough for the gullible interpreter; but what of the puzzled government bookkeeper at Tokyo, who poured over volumes of reports from the rural districts, seeking in vain to find out what had become of "Alfred Leland of Lincolnlane?"

I reached Yokohama that night and, having deposited my bundle in the Sailors' Home, continued next day to Tokyo. Financially I was near the end of my rope. My daily expenditures in Japan had barely averaged twenty-five cents; but even at that rate the fortune arising from the gratitude of the "jungle king" of Kung Chow and the generosity of the *Fausang's* captain had been gradually dissipated. Bankruptcy mattered little now, however, for Tokyo was the last city in my itinerary. Once back in Yokohama, it would be strange if I could not soon sign on some craft homeward bound. I squandered the seven yen that remained, therefore, in three days of riotous living in the capital; and, on a morning of late July, wandered out along the highway to the neighboring port.

An employee of the Tokio-Yokohama interurban, and some street urchins

Fishermen along the bay on my tramp from Tokio to Yokohama

CHAPTER XXII

HOMEWARD BOUND

THERE was preaching and singing in the Sailors' Home of Yokohama on the evening of my arrival. The white-bearded missionary styled the service a "mass meeting for Christ." The beachcombers in attendance were not those to cavil at names. So long as they were permitted to doze away the evening in comfortable chairs, "holy Joe" might assign any reason he chose for their presence, though there were those near me at the back of the room who grumbled now and then at the monotonous voice that disturbed their dreams.

No such protest, certainly, rose to the lips of the herculanean Chilian with whom I had fallen in during the afternoon, for whatever his inner feelings, they were stifled by his deep-rooted respect for religious services. One by one, the beachcombers drifted out into the less strident night; but the South American clung to his place as he would have stuck to his lookout in a tempestuous sea. Had "holy Joe" been gifted with a commonplace sense of the fitness of things he might have held one hearer until the benediction. Late in the evening, however, he broke off his absorbing dissertation on the Oneness of the Trinity to assign a hymn, and, stepping down among us, fell to distributing pledges of the "Royal Naval Temperance Society."

"Válgame Dios!" breathed the Chilian, as a pamphlet dropped into his lap. "He asks me to sign the pledge, me, who have n't had the price of a thimbleful in two months! This is too much! Vámonos, hombre!" and, stepping over the back of his chair, he stalked to the door.

In the darkness outside, a cringing creature accosted us. Something in the whining Italian in which he spoke led me to look more closely at him. It was the Neapolitan half-caste; more ragged and woe-begone than ever, and smudged with the dust of the coal bunkers in which he had stowed away in Kobe harbor.

I told his story to the Chilian as we struck off together towards

the park which I fancied must be our resting-place for the night. The South American, however, had not been three months "on the beach" without learning some of the secrets of Yokohama. He marched self-confidently down the main thoroughfare, past the German and American consulates, turned a corner at the European post-office, and, brushing along a well-kept hedge, stopped in the deep shadow of a short driveway. Before us was a high wooden gate flanked by two taller pillars, beyond which the thin moonlight disclosed the outlines of a large, two-story dwelling.

"Look here, friend," I interposed, "if you're going to try burglary—"

"Cállete la boca, hombre!" muttered the Chilian. "The patrol will hear you. Come on," and, placing both hands on the top of the gate, he vaulted it as easily as if it had been only half its six feet in height. I followed, and the half-breed tumbled over after me, his heels beating a noisy tattoo on the barrier. Once inside, however, the Chilian seemed to lose all fear of the patrol and crunched along the graveled walk, talking freely.

"Lucky thing for the beachcombers, this war," he said; "If there were peace we'd be sleeping in the park. Suppose the Czar knew he was giving us posada?" he chuckled, marching around to the back of the building. There was no sign of life within. Mounting to the back veranda, our guide snatched open one shutter of a low window. The half-breed was trembling piteously, though whether from hunger, fatigue, or fear, I could not know. One needed only to look hard at him to set his teeth rattling.

But I myself had no longing to be taken for a burglar.

"Here! What's the game?" I demanded, nudging the Chilian.

"Why, man," he replied, "this is our hotel, the Russian consulate," and he stepped in through the open window.

My misgivings fled. Japan and Russia were at war; the consulate, therefore, must be unoccupied, and more than that, it was Russian territory, on which the police of Japan had no more authority than in Moscow. I swung a leg over the window sill.

"Ascolta!" gasped the half-caste, snatching at my jacket; "Ci sono gente!"

I paused to listen. From somewhere close at hand came a muffled snort.

"Come on," laughed the Chilian. "It's one of the boys, snoring. Several of them make posada here."

When we had climbed in and closed the shutter, he struck a match. The room was entirely unfurnished, but carpeted with grass mats so soft that a bed would have been superfluous. The Chilian pulled open the door of a closet and brought forth a candle, pipe, blanket, and a paper novel in Spanish.

"Of course it 's only the servants' quarters," he apologized, spreading out the blanket and lighting candle and pipe; "the main part of the house is tight locked. But there 's plenty of room for such of the boys as I have passed the word to,— sober fellows that won't burn the place up."

He picked up the novel and was still reading when I fell asleep. Sunlight streaming into my face and the sound of an unfamiliar voice awakened me in what seemed a short hour afterward. The window by which we had entered stood wide open, and a Japanese in European garb was peering in upon us.

"What you make here?" he demanded, as I sprang to my feet. "Come out quick or I call the police."

The Chilian stirred and thrust aside the jacket that covered his face.

"Go on way!" he growled, in the first English I had heard from his lips. "Go on way an' leave us to sleep."

"I call the police," repeated the native.

"Bloody thunder, police!" bawled my partner, sitting up. "Go on way or I break your face."

The Jap left hastily.

"Close the shutters," continued the Chilian, in his own tongue. "Too early to get up yet. That fellow is from the French consul, who has charge of this place. He disturbs us every morning, but he can do nothing."

Two hours later the Chilian stowed away his property. When the coast was clear, we climbed the gate and returned to the Home.

Life on the beach in Yokohama might have grown monotonous in the days that followed but for the necessity of an incessant scramble for rice and fishes. Out beyond the park were a score of native shops where a Gargantuan feast of rice and stewed *niku* — meat of uncertain antecedents — sold for a song. There were times, of course, when we had not even a song between us; but in the Chinese quarters nearer the harbor, queued shopkeepers offered an armful of Oriental fruits and the thin strips of roasted pork popularly known as "rat-tails" for half a vocal effort. Or, failing this, there were the vendors

of *soba,* who appeared with their push-carts as dusk fell, demanding only two sen for a bowl of this Japanese macaroni swimming in greasy water, and the use of a badly-worn pair of chopsticks. The Chilian was versatile, I had been "busted" before; between us we rarely failed to find the means of patronizing at least the street vendors before retreating to Russian territory.

Never had I doubted, on the day of my stroll back from Tokyo, that the end of August would find me again in "the States." By the time I had learned to vault the consulate gate as noiselessly as the Chilian, the Pacific seemed a far greater barrier. For shipping was dull in Yokohama; the shipping, that is, of white seamen. That day was rare in which at least one ship did not weigh anchor; but their crews were Oriental. His book might be swollen with honorable discharges, his stubby fingers nimble at making knots and splices; but plain Jack Tar from the western world was left to knock his heels on the long stone jetty and hurl stentorian oaths at each departing craft.

A "windjammer," requiring a new crew, would have solved many personal problems; and there were three such vessels, two full-rigged ships and a bark, riding at anchor far out beyond the breakwater. But as far back as the oldest beachcomber could remember, they had showed no signs of life, and their gaunt masts and bare yards had long since come to be as permanent fixtures in the landscape as the eternal hills beyond. Moreover, rumor had it that the crafts were full-handed. Now and then a pair of their apprentices dropped into the Home of an evening; more than one of "the boys," skirmishing for breakfast in the gray of dawn, had come upon the light of one of their crews on his beams' ends in the gutter of the undignified district beyond the canal. But sober or besotted, not a man of them dreamed of clearing out; and "the boys" had long since given up all hope of being called to fill a vacancy.

I had, of course, lost no time in making known my existence at the American consulate. Captains were not unknown in the legation; not many moons since, a man had actually been signed on in that very building! Each interview with the genial consul was full of good cheer; yet, as a really satisfying portion, good cheer was infinitely inferior to a bowl of soba. Between pursuing that elusive substance through the streets of Yokohama and over her suburban hills, and wiping our feet on the mats of steamship offices of high and low degree, neither the Chilian nor I found cause to complain of the inactivity of existence.

In one thing the South American was eccentric. He would not beg. Though, to tell the truth, there was small temptation to be overcome in that regard; for the Jap is an ardent believer in the old adage anent the initial dwelling place of charity. Twice we found work in the city, the first in the press room of one of Japan's English newspapers, the second on the wharf. But if the price of living was low, the wage scale was even more debased; and there were others to partake of our earnings, for in Yokohama were at least a score of beachcombers with well-developed appetites, closely banded together in a profit-sharing company.

When work failed, the blanket in the cupboard netted one yen. That gone, there were a few odds and ends of wearing apparel in my bundle to be offered up. The Chilian owned two pair of shoes; an extraordinary amplitude of wardrobe that smacked of foppishness. He felt more comfortable when the extra pair had been transferred from "holy Joe's" keeping to the sagging line above the pawnshop door. When the shoes had been eaten, intercourse with the broker lapsed. Except for my kodak and our pipes not a thing remained but the clothes we stood in.

Then came the legacy from "Frisco Kid." The "Kid" was one of the few Americans among us. On the first evening that we were forced to retreat "sobaless" to the Home, he drew me aside for a moment.

"You know," he whispered, "the *Pliades* is going out to-night? I 'm going to have a try at sticking away on her, an' the washee man has a few of my rags."

He thrust into my hand a wooden laundry check.

"If I don't turn up in the morning, the stuff 's yours. So long. I 'll give 'em your regards in the States."

At nine next day he had not returned, and, having satisfied the laundryman with a few coppers borrowed from the missionary, we feasted royally on the contents of the bundle,— a khaki uniform and two shirts.

It was on Saturday, nearly two weeks after my return from Tokyo, that the first prospect of escape from Japan presented itself,— a promise from the consul to speak in my behalf to the captain of a fast mail steamer to sail a few days later. Therein lay the last hope of completing my journey in the fifteen months set, and I took care that the consul should suffer no lapse of memory.

Early the following Monday, the last day of July, I turned in at

the consulate just as two men, absorbed in conversation, emerged. One was the vice-consul; the other, a man of some fifty years, stalwart of figure and of a meditative cast of countenance rendered more solemn by thick-rimmed spectacles, a Quakerish felt hat, and long black locks. I set him down at once for a missionary, and, with a seaman's instinctive aversion for the cloth, stepped aside to let him pass. The vice-consul, however, catching sight of me as he shook the stranger's hand, beckoned to me to approach.

"By the way," he said, addressing the stranger; "here is an American sailor who has been hanging around for a couple of weeks, and he has not been drunk once —"

Obviously not; it takes money even to buy saki.

"Can't you take him on, captain?"

Captain, indeed! Of what? The mail steamer, perhaps. I stepped forward eagerly.

"Umph!" said the stranger, looking me over. "On the beach, eh? Why, yes, I am none too full-handed. But it's too late to sign him on; my articles have been endorsed.

"Still," he went on, "he can come on board and I'll set him down as a stowaway, and sign him on when once we're clear of port."

"Good!" cried the vice-consul. "There you are! Now don't loaf and make us ashamed to ask a favor of the captain next time."

"Here's a yen," said the captain. "Go get something to eat and wait for me on the jetty."

I raced away to the Home to invite the Chilian to a farewell luncheon; then returned to the appointed rendezvous. The day was stormy, and a dozen downpours drenched me as many times during the seven hours that I waited. Towards nightfall the captain drove up in a 'rickshaw and, without giving me the least sign of recognition, stepped into his launch. As he disappeared in the cabin below, I sprang to the deck of the craft.

Ten minutes later I should have given something to have been able to spring back on the wharf. The launch raced at full speed out across the harbor, past the last steamer riding at anchor, and turned her prow towards the open sea. Where in the name of Father Neptune was she bound? I wiped the water from my eyes and gazed in astonishment at the receding shore. The last tramp was already far astern. The higher waves of the outer bay caught the tiny craft as she slipped through the mouth of the breakwater and sent me waltzing about the slippery deck. Had the long-haired lunatic in the

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The Russian consulate of Yokohama, in which we "beach-combers" slept

Japanese types in a temple inclosure

cabin chosen a launch for a sea voyage or —? Then all at once I understood, and gasped with dismay. Far off through the driving rain appeared the towering masts of the sailing vessels, and that one towards which we were headed had her sails bent, ready for departure. That blessed vice-consul had sentenced me to work my way home on a windjammer!

Dusk was settling over the harbor when the launch bumped against the ship's side. The rain had ceased. Several seamen, sprawling about the forward deck, sprang to their feet as I poked my head over the bulwarks.

"Hooray!" bellowed a stentorian voice, "A new shipmate, lads. Turn out an'—"

The rest was lost in the resulting uproar. Sailors in every stage of undress stumbled out of the forecastle; pimple-faced apprentices bobbed up from amidships; even "Chips" and the sailmaker lost their dignity and hurried forward, and in the twinkling of an eye I was surrounded by all hands and the cook.

The "doctor" gave me leave to dry my uniform in the galley, and I retired to the forecastle to spin my yarn to the excited crew. A general laugh greeted the account of my meeting with the captain.

"A stowaway, is it!" cried one of the seamen. "There 'd be more truth in sayin' you was shanghaïed. That 's a favorite game with the old man to cut down expenses an' square 'imself with the owners. Sign you on! Of course 'e could if 'e 'd wanted. No damn fear! An' 'im five 'ands short. Hell, if this was a civilized port not a clearance paper would 'e get until 'e 'd signed on the crew the articles calls for. Howsomever, 'ere you are, an' it 's no use kickin' after you 're 'ung. But it 's a ragged deal t' 'ave t' work your passage 'ome on a windjammer."

"This tub?" he went on, in answer to my request for information. "Aye, when I 've lighted up, I 'll gi' you 'er story in a pipeful. She 's the *Glenalvon,* square-rigged ship an' English built, as you can see wi' your eyes shut, 1927 tons, solid enough, being all iron but 'er decks an' the blocks; but that 's all 's can be said for 'er. This crowd shipped on 'er out o' Newcastle two year ago with coal for Iqiuque, loaded saltpetre for Yokohama, and she 's bound now for Royal Roads in ballast — to load wheat for 'ome, like 'nough. With a cargo she 's a good sailor, an' 'as made the States in twenty-four days; but with only mud in 'er bottom an' foul wi' barnacles there 's no knowin'. Maybe a month."

"Countin' yourself there 's thirty-three on board, one of 'em a woman an' two of 'em goats. To begin with, there 's the skipper. Ten t' one you took 'im for a 'Christer.' They all does ashore, but 'e 's a hell of a way from bein' one afloat. He 's a bluenoser named Andrews, an' the biggest —— that ever come out o' Halifax. Mind you don't fall foul of 'im."

"The mate 's a bluenoser, too, bit longer 'n a belayin'-pin, with no 'air under 'is cap, an' no sailorman. Oo ever seen a bald-'ead as was? *'E* ain't been caught 'igher aloft these two year 'n the spanker-boom.

"Second mate 's a Irish lad, just got 'is papers an' a good seaman, but hazin' the boys like all these youngish chaps. The doctor 's a Swede, Chips comes from the same island, an' Sails is a Dutchman. Then there 's seven men in the port watch an' five in the second mate's, ten apprentices amidships, only three of 'em big enough t' be more 'n in the way, an' 'Carrot-top,' the cabin boy. The skipper 's wife — if she is — is a scrawny heifer you would n't be seen walkin' down the Broomielaw with; a bluenoser, too, some says, but there 's no knowin', for not a 'and 'as she spoke these two year. An' there you 'ave the outfit, four less 'n when she shipped 'er mud-hook — after losin' one off the Horn, two clearin' out in Chilly, an' plantin' my mate in the English cementery up there on the Bluff."

By the time my clothes were dry the second mate came forward to assign me to the starboard watch, and I turned in with my new messmates. That we were not called until dawn was a sure sign that the day of sailing had not come. After breakfast four apprentices rowed the captain and his wife ashore, and we spent the day painting over the side.

Once turned in again, it barely seemed possible that I had fallen asleep when there came a banging on the iron door of the forecastle and a blatant bellow of:—

"All hands! Up anchor, ho!"

With only five minutes' grace to jump into our clothes, we tumbled out precipitately. Twenty-two men and boys, their heads still heavy with sleep, grasped the bars of the capstan on the forecastle-head just as five bells sounded, and for four hours we marched round and round the creaking apparatus. One man at a steam winch could have raised the anchor in ten minutes, but here everything was entirely dependent on man-power; the *Glenalvon* had not so much as a donkey-engine.

Dawn found us still treading the never-changing circle in time to a mournful dirge sustained by long-winded members of the crew. The sun rose and the sweat ran in streams along the bars. Hunger gnawed us inwardly. The skipper turned out for his morning constitutional, a steamer slipped by us, at every revolution I caught myself gazing regretfully across the bay at the flag-pole of the Russian consulate.

Then all at once the second mate, peering over the side, raised a hand.

"Belay all!" bellowed the skipper, from the poop. "Lay aloft, all hands! Shake 'em out! Man the wheel!"

The crew sprang into the rigging. We loosened a dozen sails and, leaving a man on each mast to clear the downhauls, slid down on deck again and sheeted home the topgallants and the lower topsails. Then came a more arduous task,—to hoist the upper topsail yards. Every human being on board except the captain and his wife tailed out on the rope; even then we were not enough. The massive iron yard rose, but only inch by inch, and every heave seemed to pull our arms half out of their sockets.

Seamen, like Arabs, work best in unison under the inspiration of music. "Sails," the *Glenalvon's* acknowledged leader in vocal productions, burst out in a rasping shriek:—

"As I was walkin' down Ratcliffe Highway."

All hands caught up the chorus in a roar that the distant cliffs threw back at us:—

"BLOW! BOYS! BLOW THE MAN DOWN!" heaving together at each repetition of the word "blow."

"Sails" continued:—

"A pretty young maid I chanced for to meet."

"OH! GIVE US SOME TIME TO BLOW THE MAN DOWN!"

"Says she, 'Young man, will you stand treat?'"

"BLOW! BOYS! BLOW THE MAN DOWN!"

"'Delighted,' says I, 'for a charmer so sweet.'"

"OH! GIVE US SOME TIME TO BLOW THE MAN DOWN!"

The yard rose a bit faster but by no means rapidly. The skipper paced the poop, cursing us all for blunderers.

"Steward!" he roared, "bring a bottle of grog!"

The "doctor" let go the rope as if it had suddenly turned red-hot, and ran for the lazaret. A smile of anticipation flitted along the

line of perspiring faces. A promise of double wages for all hands would have been less effective. The resulting heave took me so by surprise that I was carried off my feet.

The cook appeared on the quarter-deck, and the skipper snatched the bottle he carried and examined it attentively. We were too far away to hear their conversation; but the yard was moving skyward by leaps and bounds. Then suddenly the lord and master of us all turned and pitched the bottle into the sea.

"My Gawd!" ran a horrified whisper along the rope. "E's threw it overboard. 'E thinks we're sodgerin'."

But for the tenacity of a few of us the yard must have come down by the run.

Inspiration came again, however, for the cook ran off and returned with a second flagon. The first, it turned out, had a tiny hole in the bottom and was empty.

The topsail was quickly sheeted home and I lined up with the rest before the galley-door to drink my "three fingers" of extremely poor whiskey. Then, breaking up into smaller groups, we hoisted the "fore-and-afters," and, when we turned in for breakfast an hour late, weak and ugly from hunger, the *Glenalvon* was carrying every stitch of canvas but the three royals and her cross-jack.

"At least," I told myself, rubbing my aching arms between mouthfuls of watery "scouse," "we're off, and the worst is over."

Which proved only how little I knew of the vagaries of "windjammers."

Tokyo Bay, shaped like a whiskey bottle with the neck turned westward, is so nearly land-locked that few masters of sailing vessels attempt to beat their way out of it. When we had begun to heave anchor a fair wind promised to carry the *Glenalvon* straight out to sea. By dawn, however, it had shifted and before grog had been served it blew from exactly the opposite point of the compass. Nothing was left but to tack back and forth against it. A bellow summoned us on deck before breakfast was half over, to go about ship. A few more mouthfuls and a short pipe and we wore ship again. But it was no use. The head wind increased, the bay was narrow; on the third tack the skipper ventured too close ashore, lost his head, and roared out an order:—

"Let go the anchor!"

The "mud-hook" dropped with a mighty roar and rattle of cable; the fore-and-aft sails came down with a run; ropes screamed through

the blocks; the topsail yards fell with a crash; the topgallants bellied out and snapped in the breeze with the boom of cannon; the blocks at the corners of fore and main sails threshed about our heads; ropes and steel cables of every size squirmed about the decks, snatching us off our feet and slashing us in the faces; pulleys, belaying-pins, apprentices, and goats sprawled in every direction. It seemed, as a seaman put it, that "all hell had been let loose"; and in three minutes the work of five arduous hours had been utterly undone.

When the uproar had abated we took up the task of reducing the chaos to order; furled the sails, squared the yards, coiled up the thousand and one ropes that carpeted the deck, manned the pump and washed down. To an unbiased observer this would have seemed work enough for one day, but after a bare half-hour for dinner we were routed out once more and sent over the side with our paint-pots.

Exactly this same experience — without the grog — befell us the next day, and the next, and the next. It came to be our regular existence, this being called soon after midnight to man the capstan, and to work incessantly until twilight fell. Day after day the wind blew steadily in at the mouth of the bottle, barely veering a point; and, what was most regrettable, it was just the breeze to send us flying homeward, once we were out of the bay. My shipmates were less downcast than I, for it mattered little to them whether they earned their wages in Tokyo Bay or on the open sea. But even they began in time to grumble at the long hours and to curse the captain for his parsimony in refusing to charter a tug.

A week went by. The bark that had long ridden at anchor near the *Glenalvon* towed out to sea and sailed away. The mail steamer glided by so close that the Chilian hailed me from her forecastle-head. A dozen craft went in and out, and still the peerless cone of Fujiyama gazed down upon us. Had there been any chance of the request being granted, I should long since have craved to be set ashore.

There were ominous whispers in the forecastle that it was dangerous to be forever tacking back and forth in Tokyo Bay. Nor was such gossip idle. One morning, after the usual fiasco, we dropped anchor not far from the northern shore. Immediately a small Japanese war-vessel steamed out and hailed us; but her officers spoke no English, and our captain, consigning them all to purgatory, turned down into his cabin. He was up again in short order and what he saw caused his jaw to sag and his rugged countenance to take on a

sickly green pallor. Just beneath our bow, a half-ship's length ahead, the Japs had anchored a small buoy bearing the red flag that indicates the presence of a submarine mine.

The "old man" did not wait for a repetition of the offer of the Japanese to tow him to a safer anchorage. The crew manned the capstan with unusual alacrity and a cable was quickly made fast to the stern bollards. At the very moment, however, when we were beginning to congratulate ourselves on a narrow escape, the cable parted. Urged on by half a gale, the *Glenalvon* commenced to drift rapidly and unerringly towards the red flag. For one brief moment pandemonium reigned. "Carrot-top" and half the apprentices were for jumping overboard; but the foremast hands behaved like men, and a second cable was made fast just in time.

For all this experience Captain Andrews persisted in his attempt to beat out of the bay. The harbor of Yokohama came to be a sight odious to all on board, the crew was worn out in body and spirit, I began to despair of ever again taking up the well-fed existence of a landsman, and all because our niggardly skipper had set his heart on saving a paltry sixty pounds. But he was forced to yield at last, and all hands rejoiced that his miserliness had recoiled on his own head. On the morning of August eleventh we turned out to heave anchor for the tenth time. The skipper had been rowed ashore the afternoon before and a tug was waiting to take us in tow. Late in the day she dropped us outside the narrows and when night fell the *Glenalvon,* under all sail, was tossing on the open sea.

Officially my presence on board was still unknown. Next morning, as the starboard watch was about to turn in, I received an order to lay aft. The skipper was sitting at the cabin table with the open log before him.

"Here's the entry I've just made," he said, as I stepped in. "This morning, soon after losing sight of land, a stowaway was discovered on board, who gives the name of H. Franck, nationality, American, and profession, seaman. He has been turned to with the crew and entered on the articles with the rating of A.B., at one pound a month"—my shipmates drew three—"under the maritime regulations covering such cases."

I touched the pen with which the captain had inscribed my name on the articles, muttered a "thank you," and returned to the forecastle.

My signing on was by no means the last episode to break the monotony of the voyage. In fact, unexpected episodes came with such

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A Yokohama street decorated for the Taft party. The display is entirely private and shows the general good will of the Japanese toward the United States

[illegible]

frequency during the trip that even they in time grew monotonous. First of all, the breeze that had held us bottled up for twelve days shifted to a head wind that soon increased to a gale. For more than a week it blew steadily from the same quarter, varying only in violence. Rain poured almost incessantly. Lashed by the storm, the sea rose mountains high, and the ship, being in ballast, reared like a cowboy's broncho, or lay on her beams' ends like a mortally wounded creature. There was no standing on the deck. The best pair of sea-legs was as useless as the wabbly shanks of a landlubber. We moved about like chamois on a mountain peak, springing from bollard to bulwarks and from bulwarks to hatch combing, or dragging ourselves hand over hand along the braces to windward. A steady gale would have made life less burdensome, for so erratic was the weather that every square of canvas from the mizzen-royal to the flying-jib must be furled, reefed, and shaken out again a dozen times a day. The bellow to lay aloft was forever ringing in our ears; we lived in the rigging, like apes in their tree tops. If the trimming of sails languished for a moment, there was a standing order to go about ship as often as men enough for the manœuvre reached the deck.

It was a submarine task, this wearing ship. The lee braces rarely appeared above the water line, and, once tailed out on them, every man clung to his rope like grim death, for it was literally his only hold on life; to let go meant a short shift to Davy Jones' locker. With every roll the sea swept high above our heads and left us floundering in the scuppers like fish strung on a line. There were no rousing "chanties" to cheer us on, for not even the sailmaker could air his vocal accomplishments to advantage under water. But even without such inspiration no man thought of loafing at the lee braces; and more than once we took "a long pull and a strong pull" before the ship righted and brought us sputtering and choking to the surface. Out on the jib-boom the duckings were of even longer duration, for there one went down, down, down into the cool, green depths of the sea until the world above seemed lost to memory.

There were chronic pessimists on board the *Glenalvon,* there were several who posed as infallible prophets in maritime matters; but it is certain that not one of the ship's company had anticipated any such trip as this. Word drifted forward that the "old man" swore never before to have known such weather on the north Pacific. All hands took solemn oath that rounding the Horn had been a house-boat excursion in comparison. In the forecastle the conviction grew that

there was a "Jonah" on board. The identity of the culprit came to be the question of the hour. Gradually the crew broke up into three contending factions. One group accused me, as a newcomer, of being the hoodoo, another regarded the bald-headed mate as the source of evil, while the suspicions of the third fell on the one-eyed goat. The varying notions gave rise to many a heated debate, to mutual vituperation, and occasional blows; but the real cause of our misery was never clearly established.

The head wind, the pouring rain, and the intermittent gales continued, not only for days but for weeks. The weather turned bitter cold. Unable to hold to her course, the *Glenalvon* ran "by the wind" far to the north. One night on the second week out the one-eyed goat froze to death. With only my khaki uniform I should have suffered a similar fate but for the kindness of a shipmate, who, having purchased at auction the clothing of the man lost off the Horn, and being deterred by a seaman's superstition from wearing a "dead man's gear" on the same voyage, put the garments at my disposal. In the thickest raiment we shivered at noonday; no man's chest contained sufficient wardrobe to keep him warm during the long night watches.

A mere enumeration of the hardships and misfortunes that befell the *Glenalvon* during that voyage would draw out this yarn to unprecedented length. We slept in wooden bins with a sack of chaff at the bottom, and lashed ourselves fast to keep from being thrown out on the deck. The condition of the beds mattered little, though, for we rarely found opportunity to occupy them. The skipper worked his crew like galley-slaves because it was his nature to do so; the bald-headed mate kept the starboard watch on deck two-thirds of the time because he had a grudge against the second mate that included even the men under him.

Every garment forward of the mainmast was dripping wet or frozen from one week's end to the other. The rigging was coated with ice from bulwarks to masthead. The sails were frozen as stiff as sheet iron and reduced our fingers to mere bleeding stumps. The food in the lazaret fell so low that we were reduced to half rations; which was as well, perhaps, for the stuff had been on board for more than two years and there was not an ounce of it that could not be smelled from the royal yard, as it passed from galley to forecastle. The "salt horse" was worm-eaten, the pork putrid; the man who split open a sea biscuit and found therein less than a dozen weevils

carried it around to his mates as a curiosity. The biscuits in one cask, broached towards the end of the voyage, were stamped with the date 1878.

The effect of this delectable diet was an epidemic of boils. As many as five men were laid up at a time from this cause, even though the skipper refused to enter on the sick-list any one with less than a dozen. An old Welchman in the port watch displayed forty-two at one time. Having joined the ship more recently, I escaped the attack, but with that single exception not a sailor nor an apprentice was spared, and even the second mate appeared one morning with a shame-faced air and a bandage peeping out from the sleeve of his ulster.

Accidents were as common as boils. But for the fact that a seaman prides himself on indifference to minor injuries, there would have been nothing left but to heave to and turn the craft into a floating hospital. The stoutest apprentice was struck on the head by a flying block and rendered senseless for days. A burly Swede, the best seaman on board, clung too zealously to a tack sheet, which, yanking his hands through a hawser hole, broke his right arm. Looking forward to an easy passage, the captain had rigged out the ship in her oldest suit of sails. One by one the gale reduced them to ribbons. The bursting of canvas sounded above the roar of every storm. As each sail went, new ones of double-weight canvas were dragged from the locker and hoisted aloft. It was ticklish work to bend a sail on the icy yards, with the foot-rope slippery and every line frozen stiff, while the ship swung back and forth far below like a cork on the end of a stick. Every sail of the "soft-weather suit" carried away before that unchanging head wind and even the new canvas could not always withstand its violence. Between Yokohama and Royal Roads the *Glenalvon* lost no fewer than twenty-seven sails.

The most dismal day of the voyage was the second of September. About seven bells of the morning watch, the mate, fearing a blow, let go about half the canvas. All of it except the fore-royal had been furled when I returned the "scow-pans" to the galley. It was then about three minutes to eight bells, and under ordinary circumstances the flying royal would have been left for the next watch. There were, however, in the port watch, two apprentices, nearly out of their time, who had won the enmity of the first mate.

"What the devil are you hanging back for?" he shouted, advancing upon them. "Lay aloft and furl that royal!"

The apprentices mounted, muttering to themselves. Eight bells

sounded before they were half-way up the mast. Squirming out on the yard, one hundred and sixty feet above the deck, they took in the slack of the sheet. But their anger, evidently, had not abated, for one, grasping a gasket, wound it once round the sail, and yanked savagely at it. The rope carried away. With flying arms the apprentice fell head foremost, struck on a back-stay, bounded against the foresail, and crashed on the deck a few feet from the forecastle door. His brains washed away in the scuppers.

One by one the crew slunk into the forecastle, shuddering or grumbling. Soon, however, there came a summons for all hands to lay aft. We hastened to execute the order. The captain, no doubt, wished to express his sorrow at the misfortune. He stood at the break of the poop, puffing fiercely at a huge, black cigar; and not a word did he utter until every man had assembled.

Then, stepping to the rail, he raised a clenched fist and bellowed:— "Why the bloody hell don't you damn fools be careful! Don't you know we 're short-handed already? Lay aloft, a couple of hands, to furl that royal — and clean up that mess forward."

On the eighth of September we crossed the meridian less than half a degree south of the Aleutian Islands. During the week ending that noon we had been routed out from every watch below, we had pulled and hauled and reefed and furled times without number, and we had covered just sixty miles!

But on that day the Jonah weakened, for the wind turned northerly, and, though the gale continued, the *Glenalvon* caught the breeze on her beam and raced homeward like a steamer. The invalids began to pick up, though the garbage doled out to us was as nauseating as ever. Then came an unlooked-for catastrophe to depress our rising spirits. The tobacco gave out! Those fortunate beings who had a plug laid away would not have sold it for its weight in gold. They chewed each quid for half a day and stuck it up on the bulkhead above their bunks, smoking it when it had dried. The Swede gave a suit of clothes, a sou'wester, and a half-worn pair of shoes for two cubic inches of the weed. Another offered a month's wages for a like amount and was deterred from carrying out the transaction only because the skipper refused to note it in the articles. The tobaccoless smoked the ground beans that passed for coffee — or tea, according to the hour; and, when the "doctor" refused longer to supply the stuff, they smoked rope-yarns and scraps of leather picked up in the rubbish under the forecastle-head.

It must not be supposed that our labors were confined to the mere task of sailing the vessel. Far from it. The "old man" begrudged every sailor his watch below; he would have died of apoplexy had he caught one of us loafing during his watch on deck. He was a firm believer in the rust-eaten adage, "Six days shalt thou labor and do all that thou art able; and, on the seventh,— holystone the deck and scrape the cable." We did both these things and a great many more. It mattered not in the least whether the watch had been robbed of its "time below" for several consecutive days, there must be no idling during "ship's time." On this passage of the Pacific there was not a day that the *Glenalvon* carried the same canvas steadily for four hours; yet we found time during the trip to paint the entire hold from keel to deck, to overhaul every yard of rigging, to chip and rub off with sand and canvas all paint above decks and daub on a new coat, to scour and oil every link of the cable, to overhaul the capstan, and to braid rope-yarns enough to have supplied the British merchant marine for a twelvemonth to come. When all else failed we were sent down in the hold to sop up the saltpetre saturated bilge-water,— and lost most of the skin on our hands in consequence.

There was no getting the upper hand of Captain Andrews. One memorable day when the wind held good for a few hours and even the second mate was gazing helplessly at several unoccupied seamen, the "old man" gathered the watch together and dragged out of the hold the "automobarnacles." It was a contrivance not unlike a wagon-box fitted with great stiff brushes, designed to do the work ordinarily accomplished in dry dock. With a rope attached to each end the thing was thrown over the side and dragged back and forth under the hull, each circuit leaving the crew blue in the face and often tearing asunder two barnacles as huge as snail shells.

On the nineteenth day of September the rumor drifted forward that we were nearing port. There was no confirming it. The dignity of the quarter-deck requires that the skipper shall permit information of this sort to leak out only in such a way that it cannot be traced to him. The pessimists in the forecastle swore that the voyage was not half over, the conservatives vowed that we were still several days' run from the coast; but for all that, an unwonted excitement prevailed on board.

In the middle of the afternoon watch all disputes were settled by an order to get the anchor over the side. It needed no cursing to arouse every man to his best efforts. The watch below forgot their

sleepiness and turned out to scramble into the rigging, laughing childishly. In record time the anchor swung from the cathead and we waited impatiently for signs of land.

But the fog horn had been croaking at regular intervals for days. The best pair of eyes could not have made out a mountain a ship's length away. Moreover, the skipper was none too sure of his whereabouts; his reckonings, like those of many a "windjammer's" captain, were fully as much dependent on guesswork as mathematics. At four bells, therefore, we wore ship and ran due north. At midnight we went about again, and for two days we beat up and down the coast, while the crew nibbled worm-eaten biscuits in helpless rage.

On the twenty-first the gale died down to a moderate breeze and we hove to as near the entrance to Puget Sound as the skipper's reckoning permitted. In the early afternoon the fog thinned and lifted, and a mighty cheer from the watch on duty brought every other man tumbling out of his bunk. A few miles off to starboard a rocky promontory rose slowly, throwing off the gray mist like a giant freeing himself of a cumbersome garment. A tug hovering under the lee shore spied the flapping canvas of the *Glenalvon* and darted out to meet us.

As the tow-line slipped over the bollards, the first bit of news from the outer world passed between our skipper and the tug captain.

"Is the —— in yet?" bellowed the former, naming the bark that had passed us in Tokyo Bay.

"Aye," came back the answer, "three weeks ago—"

A sizzling oath mounted to the lips of the "old man."

"You 're down for lost, captain," continued the newcomer. "She reported you aground on Saratoga Spit."

"Aground hell!" roared our beloved commander, "Though we 've struck everything but ground, and no bloody mistake."

All night long the tug strained at the hawser, while the second mate, dreading the loss of his reputation as a "hazer," called upon us to trim the bare yards each time the light breeze shifted a point. In the afternoon we dropped anchor in a quiet cove close off a wooded shore decorated by several wigwams, and the "old man," being rowed ashore, returned at dusk with a side of fresh beef and a box of plug tobacco.

The next morning I turned to with the crew as usual and toiled from daylight to dark. No hint of relief having reached me by the next afternoon, I marched aft and asked for my release.

"What 's your hurry?" demanded the skipper. "I 'll sign you on at full wages and you can make the trip home in her."

"Thank you kindly, sir," I answered, "but I 'm home now, once I get ashore."

"Aye!" snorted the captain, "And in three days you 'll be on the beach and howling to sign on again. I can't sign you off here, anyway, without paying port dues. Turn to with the crew until she 's dumped her ballast and tied up in Tacoma, and I 'll give you your board-of-trade discharge."

I protested against such a delay as forcibly as the circumstances permitted.

"Huh! That 's it!" growled the master. "Every man jack of you with the price of a drink coming to him puts his helm hard down if a shift of work turns up. Well, to-morrow 's Sunday. I 'll get some money of the agents when I go ashore and pay you off on Monday morning. But I 'll have to set you down on the log as a deserter."

"Very good, sir," I answered.

Fifty-seven days after boarding the *Glenalvon* I bade farewell to her crew. Dressed in khaki uniform and an ancient pair of sea boots that had cost me four messes of plum duff, I landed with the captain at a rocky point on the further side of the cove. He marched before me until we had reached the door of an isolated saloon, then turned and dropped into my hand seven and a half dollars.

"I 've brought you here," he said, "to save you from losing your wages to those sharks down there in Squiremouth. You must be back on board by to-morrow night."

"Eh!" I gasped.

"Oh, I have to tell you that," snapped the skipper, "or I can't set you down as a deserter," and, pushing aside the swinging doors before him, he disappeared.

I plodded on towards the city of Victoria. The joy of being on land once more, above all of being my own master, was so acute that it was with difficulty that I refrained from cutting a caper in the public highway. For once I realized the full strength of that instinct which drives the seaman on the day he is paid off from a long voyage to plunge headlong into the wildest excesses of dissipation.

In reality I was still in a foreign land; yet how every detail about me suggested the fatherland from which I had so long been absent. The wooden sidewalk drumming under my boots; the cozy houses, roofed with shingles instead of tiles, and each standing with

retiring modesty in its own green lawn; the tinkle of cow-bells in neighboring pastures — a hundred unimportances, that passed unheeded when I dwelt among them, stood forth to call up reminiscences of my prewandering existence. In Victoria every passer-by seemed a long-lost friend, so familiar did each look in feature, garb, and actions. All that day, as often as I heard a voice behind me, I whirled about and stared at the speaker, utterly astonished that he should be speaking English.

I caught the night boat for Seattle and landed at midnight in my native land after an absence of four hundred and sixty-six days. For two days following I did little but sleep, then set out one evening to "beat my way" eastward, landing in Spokane the second night thereafter. My wages as a seaman being nearly exhausted, I put up at the "Ondawa Workingman's Inn," purchased a job at an employment agency, and spent a week "bucking the concrete board" for J. Kennedy, a bustling Irish contractor to whom Spokane is indebted for most of her sidewalks. At the end of that time I turned over another dollar to the employment agency and shipped as a railway laborer to Paola, Montana. The train halted at midnight at the station named, an isolated shanty in a wild mountain gorge; but, having no desire to tramp ten miles across the parched foothills to the camp of the contractor, I went on, like several of the "agency gang," by the same train — this time crouched on the steps of a Pullman car. My companions dropped off one by one as the night air set their teeth chattering, but I clung to my place until daylight came and the conductor, raising the vestibule floor above my head, invited me to "hit the grit."

A four-mile walk brought me to Havre. From one of its restaurants I had barely emerged when a ranchman accosted me. When night fell I was speeding eastward in charge of seven car-loads of cattle. Six days later I turned the animals over to the tender mercies of a packing-house in Chicago, and, on the morning of October fourteenth, entered the portals of my paternal home.

THE END

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